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**The Body in the Text: James Joyce's *Ulysses* and the Modern
Greek Novel**

A Thesis

**Submitted to the Department of English
and**

**Comparative Literary Studies
University of Warwick**

For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

Evangelia Voyiatzaki

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Abbreviations

- D's Ersi* Drosinis, George, *Ersi*, 2 vols, 2nd edn (Athens: I. N. Sideris, 1922)
- Kyria Ersi* Pentzikis, N. G., *To Mythistorema tis Kyrias Ersis*, 4th edn (Athens: Agra, 1992)
- U* Joyce, James, *Ulysses*, 1922, ed. by Hans Walter Gabler (London: The Bodley Head, 1993)
- FW* Joyce, James, *Finnegans Wake* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992)
- P* Joyce, James, *A Portrait of the Artist as Young Man*, ed. by R.B. Kershner (Boston and New York: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1993)
- SH* Joyce, James, *Stephen Hero*, ed. by Theodore Spencer, revised edition by John J. Slocum and Herbert Cahoon (London: Jonathan Cape, 1969)
- SL* *Selected Letters of James Joyce*, ed. by Richard Ellmann (London: Faber and Faber, 1992)
- JJ* Ellmann Richard, *James Joyce* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982)
- JJQ* *James Joyce Quarterly*
- UA* Gifford, Don, with Robert J. Seidman, '*Ulysses*' *Annotated: Notes for James Joyce's 'Ulysses'*, 2nd edn, rev. by Don Gifford (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988)

SUMMARY

This thesis examines the body's thematization in narrative, and as part of the aesthetic consciousness of the modernist novel. Its starting point is Joyce's pioneering association of *Ulysses* with the functions of a live body, and the interdisciplinary rationale that his Thomist aesthetics of wholeness enact. Joyce's view of his text as a multi-levelled, reciprocally interdependent hierarchy of various fields, including art and science, as developed in the Linati and Gilbert Schemes, sheds light on the polyphonic and polyglottic narratorial tactics of *U*. Joyce's enterprise is compared to the Greek modernist novel which developed its innovative techniques in accordance with the general demand for a reorientation of Greek literature toward introspection. The reception of *U* in Greece coincided with the heyday of this attempt which was characterized by experimentation and was influenced by psychoanalysis, phenomenology and anthropological studies. The three Greek authors in this study, Stelios Xefloudas, Nikos Gavriil Pentzikis, Giorgos Cheimonas, each of them representing a different period in the development of the modern novel, were variously influenced by Joyce's work. The argument particularly focuses on their use of the body in the text in the light of Joyce's work.

The foreword, a theoretical introduction, sets forth the terms of the argument. The first chapter is a brief survey of *U*'s reception in Greece. It discusses the quest for the renewal of Greek literature which started around the thirties. Tracing the links of this renewal with Joyce's work, it particularly focuses on the techniques of introspection and their association with the body, as part of the aesthetic consciousness of the inner-orientated or 'introverted' novel. The second chapter is an analysis of Joyce's paradigmatic use of the body in the text. Focusing on the act of creation in comedy, scientific discovery and aesthetic rapture, it discusses the psycho-physiological processes and the cultural psycho-dynamics which are compressed within *U*, and support its multi-perspectival and multi-interpretative orientation. Joyce's mock-heroic, his anti-theology, the aesthetics of the androgynous artist, desire in language and bodily interference in the act of writing are seen in relation to the body and in the light of Joyce's explanatory schemes. Chapter three examines Xefloudas's attempted assimilation of Joyce's introspective techniques, in the use of myth, in the questing voyager archetype, and in desire in language through the myth of eternal return. The fourth chapter discusses N. G. Pentzikis's Christian-Freudian-Jungian perspective on Joyce's work and his reworking of *U*'s motifs in a surrealist mode (dream, metamorphosis, free association). His endeavour to subvert his own literary past takes place through the re-writing of Drosinis's novel, *To Mythistorema tis Kyrias Ersis*. In this book all elements of Greek modernism are welded together. Pentzikis undoes and redoes the Parnassian novel, drawing heavily upon *U*, and the Hellenic and Byzantine legacies which he semi-parodically incorporates into his art. His use of the Rabelaisian body and the grotesque, which reflects his language games, also emulates Joyce's. The fifth chapter deals with Cheimonas, as a successor of the previous authors. Cheimonas revisits all the thematic motifs of Joyce and of the aforementioned Greek authors in the light of contemporary phenomenology, psychoanalysis, psycho-linguistics and deconstruction. In an attempted assimilation of the language of *FW* and Joyce's preoccupation with the sound of the word, he writes an elliptical prose violated in its syntax, grammar and word-formation. His texts are a journey to the origins of language. Through violent dramatizations of psycho-linguistic theories, these texts aim at revealing the body's voice.

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CHAPTER ONE

Theoretical foreword

This work is an attempt to examine the body's presence in certain literary texts and its impact not just on their meaning but on their mode of signification. The chosen writers share a conception of language whereby bodily functions underlie utterance. Their writings unveil the metaphoric and displaced functions of primary processes which they see to be embodied in narrative and language.¹ Probing their language's metaphoricity, the thesis will bring to the fore the material and corporeal properties preceding enunciation. It will show the mental and emotional substratum of the subject and the psycho-history written on the body.

The thesis focuses on works by four authors, namely James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922), Stelios Xefloudas's *Odyseas* (1974), Nikos Gavriil Pentzikis's *To Mythistorema tis Kyrias Ersis* (1966), and Giorgos Cheimonas's *Peisistratos* (1960), *I Ekdromi* (1964) and *O Giatros Ineotis* (1971).² It examines the influences of Joyce's work on the Greek authors within the modernist context and from the particular viewpoint of the impact of the body on the narrative as encountered in *U*.

Joyce's *U* is the exemplary text of this analysis although there will also be references to *Finnegans Wake*.³ Incorporating and imitating the functions of a live body, *U* draws heavily upon the corporeal aspects of creation, utterance and language. In doing so it anticipates later twentieth-century theories dealing with the materialization of language, particularly those which derive from psychoanalysis and phenomenology, including the work of Jacques

¹ On primary unconscious bodily impulses and secondary conscious ones, see Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, The Penguin Freud Library, 15 vols (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1991), IV, pp. 22-23, 314-338, 414-18 and 745-769.

² For *Ulysses*, I use Hans Walter Gabler's corrected text first published 1986, reprinted 1993. This edition follows the line divisions of the critical edition (New York: Garland, 1984). Each citation is followed by a parenthesis containing the number of the chapter followed by the line number(s). *FW* citations are followed by a parenthesis containing the page number followed by the line number(s). Xefloudas's *Odyseas* was written in 1965-67 and published 1974. I use the 4th edn (1992) of Pentzikis's *To Mythistorema tis Kyrias Ersis*, hereafter referred to as *Kyria Ersi*; For Cheimonas's prose I have used *Peisistratos* 2nd edn (1980), *I Ekdromi* 4th edn (1982), and *O Giatros Ineotis*, 4th edn (1982).

³ *FW* is mostly discussed with reference to Cheimonas's work.

Lacan, Julia Kristeva and Jacques Derrida. Owing to its heavy investment in bodily functions, *U* has attracted psychoanalytic criticism from the early stages of its reception until the present. Inevitably, this reception was influenced by the stages of development of this field. Jung's naïve and literalistic conjunction of literature and psychology considered *U* 'as an example of the schizophrenic mind'.⁴ The question of the relationship between the body and the text in Joyce has been revisited in a more sophisticated way by linguistic and psychoanalytic theories of the late twentieth century, but these have not avoided reductive approaches. Skipping the question of psychosis or neurosis in a literary text and focusing on gender, the Oedipus complex, perversion and homosexuality, such philosophizing on the functions of the unconscious has led the reading of *U* into a question of normality or abnormality. The most characteristic case is Colin MacCabe's Lacanian approach which claims that 'Joyce's texts are best characterized as perverse rather than neurotic or psychotic'.⁵ From another perspective, Christina Froula's recent analysis, based on the politics of gender, explores the cultural psycho-dynamics of perversion in Joyce's work.⁶ The present study would construe both these approaches as relatively 'reductive', each one from its own viewpoint. It would be equally reductive to attribute the pell-mell of the 'Circe' episode to Joyce's alcoholism or the androgynous artist theory to his sexual disposition. Neither of these interpretations answers the question of why any alcoholic or pervert cannot create texts like *U*.

The question of the body in the text, however, is the cardinal issue which has generated all these approaches, and not without reason, as will be seen. One should be careful not to throw out the baby with the bath-water when it comes to psychoanalytic approaches to *U*, for each of these theories has a partial validity. For example, Kristeva's theories draw heavily on Freud's primary processes, on Bakhtin's carnivalesque, on Lacan's language

⁴ Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce* (Oxford: Faber and Faber, 1992), p. 628.

⁵ Colin MacCabe, *James Joyce and The Revolution of The Word* (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1978), p. 28.

⁶ Christine Froula, *Modernism's Body, Sex, Culture, and Joyce* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

theory, and phenomenology's 'motility' of signification.⁷ Despite their metaphorical status, each provides a valid context for understanding her theory of the semiotic activity within the symbolic structure of language. Similarly Derrida's deconstruction, although far from being psychoanalytic, enforces multi-interpretation and ambiguity by denying the logocentric univocality of language. These latter theories, although mutually incompatible, share the common elements of being developed in dialogue with Joyce's work and drawing heavily upon the corporeal in its displaced and metaphorical renditions. In fact their re-reading of Joyce's work might have been partly generated by an intuition found in Joyce's work concerning the relationship between the body's primary processes and their displacement in language's secondary level operations.

Associating *U* with the functions of a live body, Joyce intuited this multi-perspectival approach to narrative which only later theories have caught up with. Nevertheless, using their own metaphors to speak about Joyce's highly metaphorical language, these theories, especially Lacan's, missed the psycho-physiological track of *U*. Joyce conjoined his text with the functions of certain organs, 'jocoseriously' resorting to science and physiology. He characterized his prose for example as 'peristaltic' or as conditioned by the 'loco-motor ataxia' of the hypothalamus in the 'Lestrygonians' and the 'Circe' episodes respectively. His ironic view of science and medicine, which, along with other fields of thought, he parodically incorporated within his work, might have alerted us to the psycho-physiological aspect of his narrative. His text highlights all those primary processes relating to the body's functions which precede utterance and language, and can only be perceived as secondary, displaced, symbolic, and metaphoric. Quite Freud-like, he alerts us to the sensory, muscular, respiratory, metabolic, and procreative functions within his text. Moreover, through poetic licence, he indicates the essentially textual nature of these parallels through

⁷ M. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. by Colin Smith (London and New York: Routledge, 1962), p. 98. On 'semiotic motility' see Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, trans. by Margaret Wallat (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), p. 47.

his well-known schemes. These schemes are all written as sequels to *U* to explain its highly metaphoric and symbolic language.⁸ At the same time, he exploits them to produce the unfamiliarity of a text which unfolds as if under the lens of a microscope, or against a backdrop of an x-rayed human body. As will be discussed, the employment of the body in the text is associated with the scientific or pseudo-scientific spirit conjoined with art, which was part of the modernist enterprise as encountered in works of Joyce's contemporaries including Thomas Mann, Virginia Woolf, and D.H. Lawrence.⁹

The fundamental element which sustains, and is sustained by, the body's functions in the text, is Joyce's comedy. Whereas some of the recent theorizing of language has been humourless, particularly the Lacanian, this study acknowledges Joyce's humour, or even better, the jocoserious character of his art. Joyce himself many times remarked that few people had commented on his comedy. Of Jung he said, 'He seems to have read *Ulysses* from first to last without one smile'.¹⁰ Comedy, humour, and witticism are central to Joyce's creation and are the body's impact on the text. Joyce's comedy, in its emotional substratum based on the body, has an inherent physiological, scientific or pseudo-scientific basis. Similarly, his detached attitude toward nature constitutes a scientific and medicinal perspective, while the act of creation is viewed as a cathartic release of the body affecting narrative and language. Thus we will examine the act of creation in *U* in its comic and scientific aspects by which Joyce parodically undermines naïve aesthetic rapture and its impact upon the act of writing. Our argument will also focus on the Linati and Gilbert schemes which provide the bodily correspondences for each episode and enact the interdisciplinary logic of the text.

⁸ For a brief history of the schemes see Richard Ellmann, '*Ulysses*' on the Liffey (London: Faber and Faber, 1972), pp. 177-187. For the deciphering and explanatory character of the schemes, see Joyce's letter to Carlo Linati on September 21, 1920. *SL*, p. 270.

⁹ For example, Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain* (1924) is set in a sanatorium. Mann's novel links desire with psychosomatic illness and foregrounds such scientific achievements of its time as the discovery of x-rays.

¹⁰ Ellmann, *JJ*, p. 628.

This thesis will refer eclectically to different theories dealing with the materialized and the corporeal properties of language whenever the text calls for them. It draws upon Freud's dream-work and primary processes, Julia Kristeva's theory of the semiotic, Arthur Koestler's theories of the act of creation and Derrida's neologisms relating to the body (e.g. dissemination, invagination, hymen, etc.). The approach is not committed to any of them: the purpose is not to propound a specific theory. It is to show how the text in itself operates as seen through the lens of these theories which are all based on the shared element of the body. With the exception of Derrida, Freud is the matrix out of which all these theories have sprung, and to which they return in order to justify their conclusions. Kristeva and Koestler are concerned with the same questions about the act of creation as Joyce, yet they have different ways of negotiating it. The former's neo-Freudianism, enriched by contemporary linguistics, Bakhtin's textual analysis, and Husserl's phenomenology, fabricates a set of psycho-philosophical language theories in which the 'semiotic' is of great importance to the present argument. Koestler, coming from the scientific end of the spectrum of thought, constructs his aesthetic theories in dialogue with biology and physiology. The shared grounds of their theories lies in their interest in the biological and physiological substratum of language: Kristeva's theory of the semiotic is a psycho-linguistic reworking of what Freud called 'psychosomatic'; while Koestler's theories, which explore the psycho-physiological factors of the act of creation, provide an interesting intellectual parallel to Joyce's schemes.¹¹ Both theorists help to clarify Joyce's view of the act of creation and his intersections of science and art. Focusing on the physiological aspects in *U*, we will see how far these can be taken literally. Kristeva's theories emphasize

¹¹ 'We shall nevertheless keep the term *semiotic* to designate the operation that logically and chronologically precedes the establishment of the symbolic and its subject: the term will in fact allow us to envisage a heterogeneous functioning, which Freud called "psychosomatic". [...] This word's lexemes objectively indicate a double organising constraint – both biological and social – which we view as the fundamental precondition of this functioning'. Quoted from Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 41.

the metaphorical dimension whereas Koestler's focus is on the literal. We take them as complementary to each other.

The tension between the literal and the metaphorical body in the text is varyingly manifest in the three Greek writers who have responded to the bodily aspect of Joyce's *U*. The Greek authors who are the objects of this research, have been, or claim to have been, influenced by Joyce, and they also receive *U* as a text linked with the body and its functions. *U*'s reception in Greece coincided with a period of intense debate about the re-orientation of Greek literature and the increasing demand for an escape from realism. Under the impact of anthropological studies, the implications of psychoanalysis, phenomenology, existentialism, modernism and the avant-garde, *U* was received from quite a Freudian viewpoint as a text with bodily functions relating to man's inner self.

In his *Odyseas*, Xefloudas explores the inner self of modern alienated man through his purported interior monologue and his idiosyncratic use of myth. Desire and sensuality guide this Odysseus in his inward adventure, and his quest for his feminine otherness incarnated in Calypso. Deriving more from the symbolist legacy than the modernist enterprise, his text constitutes only an intermediate case in Joyce's influence on Greek modernism. Pentzikis draws heavily upon *U* to write his *Kyria Ersi*. He employs the body to support his psycho-physiological approach to the act of creation. His humorous handling of the grotesque body, and his transformation of the Holy Trinity into a typical family romance, are very much in line with Joyce's theory of the androgynous artist. Cheimonas, in an unrefined dramatization of the implications of phenomenology, psychosomatic medicine, and contemporary psycholinguistics, exploits the body to show the psychosomatic dwelling in language's nuances, its perturbation of syntax and grammar as well as metaphors. In this enterprise, he also draws upon the language of *FW* to create the prodigal style of his narratives. Both as part of the introspective bias of their art, associated

with the 'introverted novel' (see chapter one) and as a subject-matter in itself, the body is crucial for the modernist character of the Greek texts.

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. The Historical Context: Greek Literature in the Thirties and the Demand for Innovation

The introduction of James Joyce's work to Greece coincided with a period of extensive debate about the orientation of Greek literature. At the beginning of the thirties, a radical change occurred in Greece, characterized by an overall contestation of the literary legacy. It was expressed by a group of writers who came to be known as 'The Generation of the Thirties'. The demand for innovation in the means of artistic creation was inextricably associated with controversies over national identity, language and the role of literary tradition in modernity, as well as the re-orientation of Greek literature toward its European matrix. After the First World War (1914-18) and the Greco-Turkish war (1919-22) which ended with the Asia Minor Catastrophe (1922) and the collapse of the ideals of nationalism and expansionism (the 'Great Idea') held by the Greek official ideology, this generation directed itself toward a thorough renewal of the culture. This decade saw a great number of translations of European writers deriving primarily from France and secondarily from England.¹² The same period saw a significant development in the genres of novel and essay in parallel with experimentation in style and language. The modernist enterprise, however, was overshadowed by the debates on a number of fronts among which, according to Tziovas, 'the basic dilemmas' were 'the fusion of tradition with modernity' and 'the choice between extroversion and introversion'.¹³ From this latter field emanated the demand for

¹² For a mapping of the European influences on Greek literature of this period see Peter Mackridge, 'European Influences on the Greek Novel During the 1930s', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, 3:1(1985), 1-20.

¹³ For a historical, social and ideological cartography of this period see Dimitris Tziovas, 'Introduction' and 'Mapping out Greek Literary Modernism' in *Greek Modernism and Beyond* (New York and Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1997), pp. 25-39 (p. 32).

introversion or for the 'introverted novel'. The quest for the 'introverted novel' flourished under the impact of European movements such as Symbolism and post-Symbolism and of authors such as Hamsun, Gide, Proust, and Woolf, as well as Joyce.

Joyce's reception coincided with the demand for a shift from the realist novel of the nineteenth century to a novel which would deal with the inner man. The photographic depiction of the customs and manners of the countryside was dismissed, and the focus shifted from the representation of external life to the inner landscape of the character and the author. Despite the controversies of the period, a much greater consensus was achieved in 'the demand for 'introversion'.¹⁴ This quest found its most radical expression in the Salonica literary movement.¹⁵ In fact the Generation of the Thirties, as recent criticism has observed, is clearly separable into two branches, the Athenian and the Salonican, with essentially different orientations.¹⁶

The Athenian group, although maintaining the quest for introversion as part of its innovative aspiration, hardly managed to achieve it, at least in novel-making. Theotokas is a case in point.¹⁷ The Athenian group comprised a considerably larger number of writers, more renowned than the Salonican.¹⁸ The Salonican trend was oriented toward the European modern novel and its experimental and introspective bias. However it is only within recent decades that their work has been recognized as being particularly associated

¹⁴ We borrow this term from P. Moullas, 'Eisagogi', in *I Mesopolemiki Pezografia*, 8 vols (Athens: Sokoli, 1993), I (1993), pp. 17-157 (p. 83). The terms introversion, or introverted novel, are appropriate to this kind of novel which has been called the novelist's novel or the novel which deals with the means of its own creation and explores aspects of the inner life of its characters. See John Fletcher and Malcolm Bradbury, 'The Introverted Novel', in *Modernism 1890-1930* (London: Penguin, 1976), pp. 394-415.

¹⁵ We use the word Salonica for the translation of the name of the city Thessaloniki. However, whenever the name appears in titles of books we maintain its transliterated form.

¹⁶ See Dimitris Angelatos, 'O Seferis ke to Mythistorematiko Eidos: pros mia Istoriki Poiitiki tou Imerologiou', in *Giorgos Seferis. Filologikes ke Ermineftikes Proseggiseis*, ed. by M. Pieris (Athens: Patakis, 1997), pp. 118-120, Tziovas, *Greek Modernism and Beyond*, pp. 7 and 32, Moullas (ibid, pp.17-157), Mackridge, 'European Influences on the Greek Novel During the 1930s', and G. Aragis, 'N. G. Pentzikis', in *I Mesopolemiki Pezografia*, VII (1996), pp. 46-77 (pp. 47-9).

¹⁷ Although Theotokas, one of the most eminent figures of this generation, in his seminal essay on the renewal of Greek literature, *Elefthero Pnevma* (1929), enthusiastically proclaims the necessity for an inward-orientated writing, in his novel *Argo*, he follows the traditional narrative style of the urban European novel of the 19th century.

¹⁸ In prose, the chief representatives of the Athenian branch are Kosmas Politis, Ilias Venezis, Giorgos Theotokas, Angelos Terzakis, M. Karagatsis, whereas the Salonicans are Giorgos Delios, Alkiviadis Giannopoulos, Stelios Xefloudas, and N. G. Pentzikis. For an account of the social and cultural reasons why the Salonican group remained

with the Greek modernist enterprise. Two of the three authors in this study, Xefloudas and Pentzikis, belong to this trend. The third, Cheimonas, derives immediately from them. All three of them align themselves in manifold ways with Joyce, notably in dealing with the inner experience of man.

The demand for fiction which would transfer the focus from external reality to the inner man led to one of the strongest controversies of the period. This change of focus was fostered by the narrative techniques of interior monologue and the stream of consciousness. Their presentation was related to E. Dujardin's *Les lauriers sont coupés* and to Joyce's *U*. The orientation toward the inner man also included the inner processes of novel-making and writing. This became the tantalizing issue while the quest for innovation took on Odyssean dimensions. Joyce's reactivation of the Homeric archetype of the questing voyager in terms of inward exploration befitted the inwardly-orientated Greek quest for innovation. This pursuit harked back to Hellenic origins and elevated the old Homeric archetype to a master metaphor for the sought-after renewal. The inward adventure came to be of paramount significance in the rendition of the human predicament.

Seferis attributes an Odyssean fate to the Greek nation, and the celebrated literary motif of Odyssean wandering to the historical moment which initiates the renewal of Greek culture. He also associates the quest for a new identity, or the rejuvenation of a lost identity, with the Greek 'discovery' of English literature, namely modernism.

Whatever we call geographically Greece is but a starting point, [...] a port of slow and tedious return. Odysseus's story is a story which will be narrated as long as Greece exists. However, around 1922, the greatest part of this dispersed Hellenism returns and settles within the limits of the Greek state. [...] All these travellers, [...] brought the journey to the heart of Athens. [...] This generation [...] wanted [...] to obtain consciousness of itself by assessing what its predecessors had bequeathed to it. [...] Its antecedents were very well informed about French literature. It was enchanted to discover English

literature with which it was feeling more and more familiar. This familiarization with English writing had two components. The first was the interest we showed in anything that took place in England and in whatever could contribute to a better awareness of English intellectuals in relation to our literature. I remember one day, years ago, being in the rue de l' Odéon with two friends who had published a selection of Greek poetry translated into English; we saw in Sylvia Beach's show-case the huge blue volume of the first edition of *U* and James Joyce's portrait with his thick glasses surrounded by Greek flags. 'He must have fought at the Macedonian front', said one of them. Such was our ignorance about the celebrated Irish author.¹⁹

Seferis's interest in Anglo-Saxon modernism also encompasses *U* and its reactivation of the motif of wandering. This motif seems to have set the terms for his 'theory of the inward adventure'.²⁰ Seferis's essays provide evidence of this influence which is also confirmed by one of his peers, Theotokas.²¹

The demand for innovation was also brought up by Theotokas's *Elefthero Pnevma* (1929), an essay of programmatic character, which functioned as 'the manifesto of the Generation of the Thirties'.²² The *Elefthero Pnevma* marked the separation from the literary past, namely with the dogma of Hellenism and what was called '*ethographia*', the descriptive and superficial representation of life and customs of the countryside, directed

¹⁹ Giorgos Seferis, 'Gia tous Taxidiotes tou "Sea-Adventure"', trans. mine, in *Dokimes 1932-71*, 3 vols (Athens: Ikaros, 1993) III, pp. 315-325 (pp. 320, 321, 322, 323). In the same text Seferis mentions that a colleague of his, with whom he would subsequently publish a periodical, wanted to entitle it *Odysseus*; 'and this was so because an important part of our lives was unfolding under the constellation of the *Odyssey*' (ibid, p. 323).

²⁰ Lambis Kapsetakis has a similar approach regarding the reception of Joyce in Greece at that period. He associates Seferis's ideas with his interest in *U*. 'Stichia Schetika me tin Tichi tou James Joyce stin Neoelliniki Logotechnia', *Molivdokondilopelekitis*, 6 (Athens, 1998/9), 187 – 218 (p. 188).

²¹ Theotokas claims that at that time when he himself preferred D. H. Lawrence and Aldous Huxley, Seferis 'wrestled with James Joyce's *U*'; in 'O Seferis Opos ton Gnorisa', *Epoches*, 10, (1964), p. 14. In *Allelographia (1930-66): Giorgos Theotokas & Giorgos Seferis* (Athens: Ermis, 1981), pp. 9-29 (p. 28). Vagenas extensively refers to Seferis's understanding of Joyce's mythical method in *O Poiitis ke o Choreftis: Mia Exetasi tis Poiitikis tou Seferi* (Athens: Kedros, 1991), pp. 122-157.

²² Published in the autumn of 1929, under the pseudonym Orestis Digenis, by Giorgos Theotokas (1905-66). See Vitti (1989), p. 20, Moullas (1993), p. 30, L. Politis (1978), p. 309.

toward an empirical and ethnographic naturalism.²³ Terzakis also endorsed this reorientation of Greek literature.²⁴

Seferis and Theotokas associated the inward adventure with the demand for difficult art and Bergson's theories.²⁵ Introspection, as Moullas notes, had already been apparent since the end of the previous century through Symbolism.²⁶ The outcome was Seferis's poetry in the form of journals, the exposition of what he called inner or inward adventure. The journal, or diary-like writing, became a stylish mode of expressing the inner self, Theotokas and Xefloudas being cases in point.

1.2. The 'Salonica School' and the Introverted Novel

Greek literature, therefore, found itself at a turning point. The demand for introversion and modernization, in the sense of creative absorption of European influence, encouraged a thematic transfer from *ethnographia* to the reality of the modern urban centres. The quest for the 'inward adventure' functioned as the matrix for the introverted novel. However, the issue of introversion or introspection, the focus on the inner reality in contrast to the outer, derived mostly from other literary sources: e.g. French symbolism in poetry or confessional writing.

Mentzelos, in his article 'O Esoterikos Monologos' (1933), attributes this narrative technique to Dujardin and its best formation to Joyce.²⁷ The ambiguity of the term and the

²³ See 'G. Theotokas, *Free Spirit*', trans. by Stelios Stavrou, *Modern Greek Studies Yearbook*, 2 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), pp. 153-200 (p. 166).

²⁴ He also dismisses the whole of the literary prose, with the exception of Konstantinos Theotokis, as lacking 'pnoe' (breath) and as uncreative: 'there is a lot of dryness around us', he writes, in a review of the history of the Greek novel, in 'To Neoelliniko Mythistorema', *Idea*, 8 (1933), 100-105 (p. 105).

²⁵ Bergson's concepts of 'intelligence' and 'intuition' and his theories in general fostered the poetics of absolute and pure poetry of Paul Valéry which Seferis had espoused through A. Thibaudet. Also from Terzakis's viewpoint 'Real art always and everywhere, consciously or unconsciously, was abstraction. The transubstantiation of the external world into the internal. The liberation from the crowd through the intuitive person', in 'I Agonia tou Realismou', *Rhythmos* 10 (1934), p. 308, quoted from *I Mesopolemiki Pezografia*, I, 85.

²⁶ P. Moullas, 'Eisagogi', in *I Mesopolemiki Pezografia*, I, 85.

²⁷ D. Mentzelos, 'O Esoterikos Monologos', *Kyklos*, 4 (1933), 163-168.

lack of information caused literary critics to search for this technique in any text which broke away from traditional writing. The debate was maintained through journals and the technique became an object of experimentation. Misunderstandings and misinterpretations were not rare.²⁸ It seems that, within the Generation of the Thirties, the Greek novel maintained its realist attributes in spite of a demand for inwardness and introspection.²⁹

Experimentation in the introverted novel and the technique of interior monologue were mainly associated with the Salonica School, and related to Anglo-Saxon modernism, namely Joyce, Lawrence, Woolf, and Mansfield.³⁰ Surrealism also influenced this trend. Vitti emphasizes the fact that the same critic, Mentzelos, who informed the Greek public about Surrealism was the first one to present the interior monologue.³¹ He also points out that this might seem a paradox only at first since the interior monologue was reworked 'with certain surrealist or para-surrealist experiences' in certain authors, namely M. Axioti and N. G. Pentzikis (p. 277). In the deluge of new ideas deriving from Europe, France was still the privileged source. The renewal of Greek literature attempted to take in anything experimental and innovative.

The Salonica group had the pivotal role in this venture. These authors were mainly grouped around the periodicals *Makedonikes Imeres* (first vol. 1932) and *To Trito Mati* (first pub. in 1935). The predominant figures of this movement were: A. Giannopoulos, G. Delios, S. Xefloudas and N. G. Pentzikis. Interior monologue and modernism were the

²⁸ For example Spandonidis considered that 'Theotokas used interior monologue' in *Ores Argias* (1931), see Vitti, *I Genia tou Trianta* (Athens: Ermis, 1989), p. 274.

²⁹ As Karandonis says, 'classic realism remains the basic aesthetic characteristic for most of the novels of the year, the attribute which places all of them in one category', in 'I Logotechnia mas to 1935', *Nea Grammata*, 2 (1936), 162-7, (p. 163).

³⁰ The term 'Salonica School' basically refers to the group of writers who appeared in Salonica in the 1930s. For the historical and cultural context of this movement see Mackridge, 'Cultivating New Lands: The Consolidation of Territorial Gains in Greek Macedonia through Literature, 1912-1940', in *Ourselves and Others: The Development of a Greek Macedonian Cultural Identity Since 1912*, ed. by P. Mackridge and E. Giannakakis (Oxford and New York: Berg, 1997), pp. 175-186. See also Aglaia Kehayia-Lipourli, 'Creating a literary Tradition in Salonica: The Magazine *Makedonikes Imeres* and Alkiviadis Yannopoulos', *ibid*, pp. 199-207.

³¹ M. Vitti, *I Genia tou Trianta*, p. 274. On the debate on the relationship between interior monologue and surrealist techniques see P. Spandonidis 'Ta Poiimata tou Paul Eluard', *Makedonikes Imeres*, 9-10 (1936), 338-340; Nikos Kalamaris 'Epistoli', *Nea Filla*, 3, (1937), 57-59; in Sotiris Trivizas, *To Sourrealistiko Skandalo* (Athens: Kastaniotis, 1996), pp. 93-109.

current themes in these journals and Joyce's introduction into Greek literature was also related to this movement.

Joyce's *U* was presented in Greece in a fragmentary way; its impact was identified with the technique of interior monologue as part of the Greek quest for introversion in the novel. In 1936, T. Papatzonis translated an excerpt from the beginning of Molly's monologue, which was published in the journal *To Trito Mati*,³² it had, in parenthesis, the subtitle: (*The beginning of Mrs Bloom's monologue*). In the footnote on the first translated page, the comment was that this translation functioned as a sample of interior monologue; a continuation of an attempt already started in the previous volume of the journal with the translation of an excerpt from Dujardin's *Les lauriers sont coupés*. The selection of the excerpt is not accidental, for the translations to follow were also taken from interior monologue citations. In the forties, another journal of the Salonica authors, *Kochlias*, published translations from *U*. These translations were of a collective character and their original text is the French translation of *U* in *La N.R.F.*³³

Zoe Kareli, G. Kitsopoulos, K. Tsizek, G. Svoronos, N. G. Pentzikis, L. Koniordos and T. Iatrou participated in the 1945 translation (in *Kochlias*, vol.1). In 1946, in volume 6 of the same journal, N. G. Pentzikis and G. Kitsopoulos translated the first part of Stephen's monologue entitled 'O Stephen Para Thin' Alos' (Stephen on the sea-shore). From that time onward there are dispersed attempts at translation as well as fragmentary publication of chapters of *U* translated by L. Nikolouzos; the complete edition of *U*, translated by Socrates Kapsaskis, was published in 1990.³⁴

³² 'James Joyce, *Ulysses* (I Archi tou Monologou tis Kyrias Bloom)' trans. by T. K. Papatzonis, *To Trito Mati*, 4-5-6 (1936), 162-163.

³³ Published by The Odyssey Press, in Hamburg, Paris and Bologna.

³⁴ The attempts at translating *U* are worthy of separate research but our interest here is focused on their relation to the school of Salonica and on the controversial issue of interior monologue in relation to inward adventure and the introverted novel.

The Salonica School seems to be closer to Anglo-Saxon modernism and to Joyce's work than the Athenian branch of the Generation of the Thirties.³⁵ Joyce's paradigm influenced mainly Pentzikis. Xefloudas also aspired to assimilate certain elements of Joyce's work, particularly those which related to the inner adventure of modern man. Cheimonas, a Salonican who does not belong to the Generation of the Thirties, actualizes the Joycean venture in post-modern Greek literature. Under the general impact of modernism and the narratological and stylistic achievement of *U*, the work of this literary movement was characterized by detachment from realism, the disclosure of man's inner self, the thematization of aesthetic consciousness and the focus on language.³⁶ All of these factors, mutually interwoven, uphold the quest for the introverted novel.

The detachment from realism, a demand which permeated all other factors of the movement, found its correlatives in the deployment of narrative techniques and tactics which would project both the profundity of the character's thoughts and the processes of novel-making. The basic stratagem was the creation of a novel without plot and adventures which would break with the novel of classic realism and transfer the focus from external reality to inner life. The real world would be there but its presentation would be dependent on the hero's or the narrator's perception, and would not be mimicry or representation but the outcome of a profound individual absorption. Consider this typical extract from Xefloudas's *Esoteriki Symfonia* (1932).

A book without facts, without theme. Detachment and distance of its personae from reality. Transcendence into a new reality [...]. We could say a ceaseless coalescence of life and dream [...].
(p. 5)

Xefloudas explores the relation between subjectivity and reality, focusing on the inner life. The merging of life and dream, which infiltrates his subsequent texts, has surrealistic

³⁵ Tolis Kazantzis, 'I Pezografia tis Thessalonikis', *O Politis* (special issue), November (1983), 14-21 (p. 19).

³⁶ For an approach to these issues in Joyce's *U* see Michael Bell, *The Context of English Literature 1900-1930* (London: Methuen, 1980), p. 3.

overtones. Xefloudas is exemplary not only of the experimentation but also of the confused ideas of this period. His later critical theory on the novel seems to clarify the obscurities of the period but only in retrospect.³⁷ As we shall see in the relevant chapter, this author is considered to be the introducer of interior monologue because of the introspective character of his work rather than by his use of the technique itself.³⁸ The thematization of the means of creation and his frequent statements that his narrative technique is interior monologue contributed a great deal to this assumption.³⁹ From this perspective, it is clear that the urge towards introspection was the motive behind the open advertisement of narrative techniques and of the process of novel-making.

As early as 1932, Piniatoglou, one of the first and most important of the critics who presented Joyce to Greek literature, objected to the idea of linking anything introverted or psycho-biographical with interior monologue.⁴⁰ Piniatoglou and Mentzelos examine the interior monologue in reference to both Dujardin's *Les lauriers sont coupés* and Joyce's *U*. Yet the confusion with confessional prose derives from the general importation of new ideas into Greek literature at this period, according to Moullas.⁴¹ Under this conflation of ideas one can say that while Joyce's achievement in *U* was related to interior monologue, the technique itself was also associated with the artistic movement of surrealism.⁴²

³⁷ His essay *To Synchrone Mythistorema* (Athens: Ikaros, 1955) was published twenty-five years later than the period we discuss.

³⁸ Andreas Karandonis, 'Steliou Xeflouta, Esoteriki Symfonia', *Makedonikes Imeres*, 5-6 (1932), 209-210 and 212-213. Recent criticism has questioned whether Xefloudas used interior monologue. See Maria Kakavoulia, 'Interior Monologue: Recontextualizing a Modernist practice' in *Greek Modernism and Beyond*, p.140. For us, Xefloudas is only construed as the initiator of the inward adventure in prose.

³⁹ Peter Mackridge characterizes this attempt as "the novelist's novel", in which one of the characters, himself attempting to write a novel, discusses the problems he is facing or records his aims in a journal', in 'European Influences on the Greek Novel During the 1930s', p. 7. Xefloudas clearly announces that his narrative technique is interior monologue, *Ta Tetradia tou Pavlou Foteinou* (Salonica: Anatoli, 1930), p. 22.

⁴⁰ L. Piniatoglou, 'Gramma gia ton Esoteriko Monologo', *Makedonikes Imeres*, 7 (1932), 248-250.

⁴¹ As P. Moullas observes, we are dealing with the ambiguities of an epoch, 'a sort of erosion, where the outlines are blurred, the sizes diminish, forms dissolve and the trajectory from "outside" to "inside" begins. Whatever follows in the first decades of our century (psychoanalysis, phenomenology, theory of relativity, linguistics, futurism, surrealism etc) widens the gap' (my emphasis, *I Mesopolemiki Pezografia*, I, 131). Mentzelos exemplifies this in his article on 'O Esoterikos Monologos' (*Kyklos*, 1933) where he relates this technique to the journal and the epistolary novel, and finds its origins in the still strong impact of French Symbolism, an idea also espoused by Moullas (p. 137).

⁴² See Kazantzis's opinion that interior monologue is 'the alter ego of surrealism in prose, [...] the expression of the innermost and most spontaneous thoughts of the individual. [...] an inner flow toward the unconscious, [...] the literary subject's submergence into the unconscious', in Tolis Kazantzis, *I Pezografia tis Thessalonikis 1912-1966* (Salonica: Vantias, 1991) p. 206. It is interesting that this opinion is first published as late as 1985. Also Spandonidis

Mentzelos and Piniatoglou, although of different outlooks, find an association between interior monologue and surrealism; the former believes that interior monologue is encountered in 'its most primitive and innocent form in surrealists' whereas the latter finds its completion in psychoanalytic discourse and surrealism.⁴³ An early review of *U* had already characterized Joyce as a surrealist.⁴⁴ Although this opinion did not prevail, some critics and artists recognized the existence of surrealistic elements in Joyce's work. The free associative narratives of Molly's and Stephen's monologues, translated at the beginning of the thirties, seem to have contributed to such an assumption. The critics of the period were aware not only of *U* but also of the dream-world of *FW*, as Piniatoglou's reference to Anna Livia Plurabelle shows (ibid, p. 250). Nevertheless, the whole period is suggestive of the preoccupation with techniques for presenting the inner life as part of the inward turn of the novel. As this interest took in preconscious and unconscious processes, anything opaque and dreamy was viewed as being related to interior monologue. Thus dream, free association, stream of consciousness and interior monologue, all sustained the attempt to delve into individual identity.

The techniques of montage and collage, borrowed from the avant-garde at large, contributed to the presentation of a randomly detailed world as perceived by the human consciousness. These aesthetic choices comprised a microscopic focus on external reality which interacted with and/or counterbalanced the inward projection. Xefloudas gives us an account of this perception in his presentation of *U*, stressing the novel's focus on the triviality of everyday life and its engagement with a mythic archetype, Homer's *Odyssey*:

develops the same idea, in 'Kathreftismata', *Makedonikes Imeres*, 1(1932), p. 31.

⁴³ 'In only two cases is the interior monologue completed: 1. in psychoanalysts [...] and 2. in surrealists [...]. In the case of the former it functions as a mode of the research of the unconscious, in the latter it takes the form of automatic writing. Mapping the *curriculum vitae* of interior monologue I did not consider it necessary to mention some sporadic, unsystematic attempts, in which this genre is related to other more esoteric systems (e.g. spiritualism in Leibnitz, or intuitions in Bergson or the 'throwing up' in Keyserling who is influenced by Asian primitive religions)', in D. Mentzelos, 'O Esoterikos Monologos', *Kyklos*, 4 (1933), 163-168, published in *I Mesopolemiki Pezografia*, I, 265-271. Also L. Piniatoglou writes, 'We meet interior monologue [...] in its most primitive and pure form in the surrealists, according to whom, all art is but a "throwing up", [...] of words which echo [...] the unconscious', in 'Gramma gia ton Esoteriko Monologo', *Makedonikes Imeres*, 7 (1932), 248-250.

⁴⁴ P. F., 'I Logotechnia: Mia Syzitisi gia tin Poiisi', *Nea Estia*, 6 (1929), 877-879 (p. 877).

[...] Joyce changes the existing view of the role of the external world in art. In his previous books the external world was almost ignored. In *U* it is used in detail never before attempted [...]. The novel is constructed on the basis of the *Odyssey*. All the episodes and most of the insignificant fictitious characters have their prototype in the Homeric epic. A multitude of things, facts and thoughts deriving from them, expressed in elliptical phrases and taken from everyday language, constitute Joyce's interior monologue. [...] The author composes a masterpiece of orchestration, a form of multiplicity and unity which identifies itself, one could say, with the amplitude of great music.⁴⁵

Xefloudas can recognize in Joyce's work the impact of the symbolist legacy regarding the musicality and the spatio-temporal arrangement of time and action in the novel. But what most impresses him is the manner in which reality expands under the Joycean microscopic lens.

In *U* anything that a human being can think and do in one day is analysed in minute detail; so dense are the action and the events, so depressing the atmosphere of every moment, [...] so chaotic are the depictions of the personae [...] that everything is found to be without any logical sequence or order. He (Joyce) is so opposed to anything traditional that he does not hesitate to eradicate punctuation and even the accepted regular syntax. And yet, out of all this torrential citation of things and facts, articulated in the most paradoxical way, one fact springs: the creator's tragic anxiety to include the entire universe within his book [...]. (ibid, pp. 63-64)

The attempt to escape the 'photographic' depiction of character by Greek *ethographia* and the realistic rendition of the hero with solid and definite characteristics led to a different presentation of human identity. The hero's objective participation in the novel was undermined by his dependence on the perspectives of the other participants of the story. The outcome of this was the fragmentary and gradual presentation of character, built up by different viewpoints and developed in parallel with the progress of the novel itself. In *U*, Bloom's personality is gradually sketched by the thoughts of Molly, Stephen, various Dubliners and the invisible narrator. In Xefloudas's *Odysseas*, the hero's personality is

⁴⁵ S. Xefloudas, *To Synchrono Mythistorema*, p. 63.

presented through Calypso's thought and her personality is revealed in his monologue. In Pentzikis's *Kyria Ersi*, a similar mode is employed between the main characters, Ersi and Pavlos and the narrator-artist, himself being a character in the novel he writes. In Cheimonas's ceaseless flow of images and associating ideas, the character is almost entirely dissolved into language games in an attempt to assimilate *FW*'s techniques of obscurity.

The waning of the plot also fostered this mode of presentation whose cardinal point was the disclosure of the character's inner self. The reduction of setting and action led to an abstract presentation of thoughts, revealing the most profound unconscious powers of the individual. Along with surrealism, the impact of Freudian ideas on Greek literature rendered dream an essential device upholding the development of the narrative. Pentzikis was the most characteristic case in point. In both Pentzikis and Cheimonas, dream and its interpretations support the economy of the narrative. In Xefloudas the engagement of the Odysseus archetype with modernity, together with the motif of the questing voyager shared by all three authors, function as channels both to psychic reality and to the author's quest for aesthetic accomplishment.

The motif of the wanderer and the quest for an historical, aesthetic and psychological identity accorded with Joyce's exemplary use of myth as the means for sustaining the whole of the fragmentary world of modernity. Joyce's employment of the archetype of Odysseus, and its mock-heroic overtones, reactivated the Homeric motif of the wandering traveller. Odyssean figures and the adventures of Odysseus came to play a central role in both prose and poetry.⁴⁶ Yet only Xefloudas's *Odysseas* attempts to assimilate *U* by bringing Odysseus into an anti-heroic modernity. Although his use of myth is far from Joyce's mock-heroic, the anti-heroic ambience of this text bears certain similarities with *U*. This Odysseus launches the inward adventure in prose and seeks for myth in the everyday reality of

⁴⁶ Xefloudas's *Odysseas*, Kazantzakis's *Odysseia*, and Prevelakis's trilogy *I Dromi tis Dimiourgias* are characteristic of the impact of the reactivation of the Odyssean myth.

modernity. In *Kyria Ersi*, Pentzikis also employs the questing voyager motif for his narrator's aesthetic and psychological adventure within Greek and European literary tradition and his own ordeal of rewriting Drosinis's *Ersi*. In Cheimonas, myth is a repository of the wildest, most uncompromising human impulses. Within his deconstructing bias, myth is evaporated and dismantled, radiating its core story in dispersed fragments, metaphors for the alienated condition of man. In Cheimonas, the quest becomes an anxious psychological voyage in language and literature.

The aesthetic outcome of all these processes was the self-referential novel. The participation of the characters in the process of their own creation, the overt presentation of the process of novel-making, and the aesthetics of this process, are all Joycean characteristics reactivated in these Greek authors. The revelation of the processes underlying the text fosters two aspects; one aesthetic and another psychological. As a result of the overt aesthetic tactics of the novel, the content of the novel renounces its traditional mimetic role. The world of the novel stresses its fictitious character and the personae became participants in their own creation. While in Joyce's *U* this took the form of a meditation on the aesthetics of creation as expressed in Stephen's 'Shakespeare' theory, in the Greek authors it came as an open discussion on the techniques employed. The most frequent outcome is a self-referential novel dealing with the means of its own creation.

Pentzikis's *O Pethamenos ke i Anastasi* has as its theme its own process of writing through an implied transubstantiation of the 'dead' literary material into a celebration of the modern Greek-Christian world. The issue of resurrection in Pentzikis is the cardinal point as the art, and the artist, are reborn. His aesthetic and psychological quest derives from the motif of the questing voyager; it unravels within literature and gradually builds both a portrait of an artist and an unbroken thematic development of aesthetic and psychological emancipation. Cheimonas takes up where Pentzikis left off. In an attempt to assimilate Joyce's book of dreams, *FW*, his elliptical prose opens up an enclosed psychical world

where dream and fantasy build a hallucinatory landscape. This, however, is combined with his psychoanalytic and medicinal theories, namely his theory of aphasic language. Thus language becomes the cardinal issue of his endeavour and writing the means for a curative function within the psychosomatic domain.

The use of language was a pivotal element in Joyce's impact on this literary movement. Until the thirties, the nineteenth-century linguistic controversy of Demoticism and Archaism trapped Greek critics and authors within its nationalistic character, inhibiting the development of any critical theory on language beyond the boundaries of this debate.⁴⁷ Under the impact of modern ideas, however, these Salonican authors treated language as a live entity, as a continuum which maintained the coexistence of both antiquity and modernity, and privileged everyday language.⁴⁸ The focus on folklore (demotic songs) and on the national soul preserved the symbiotic evolution of both Hellenic and Christian tradition, retained in an amalgamation of folk songs, tales, ancestral myths and Byzantine tradition. The works of Pentzikis and Cheimonas give a good account of this symbiosis.

The development of structural anthropology, along with linguistics and psychology, prefigured a new perspective for language. Language was viewed as an autonomous entity drawing its significance from its utterance and not from its dependence on the author or poet. Within its symbolic texture, language disclosed its signifying practice. We can schematically say that it bore on two signifying practices pertaining to the Freudian discovery of two different signifying systems within the human psyche: namely the conscious and the unconscious. Joyce's aesthetics and language were to be seen through the

⁴⁷ See Dimitris Tziouvas, *The Nationism of the Demoticists and its Impact on their Literary Theory 1888-1930* (Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1986).

⁴⁸ As Kouroudis argues, the left wing accused this group of authors of not participating in the disturbed political life of the country, which encompassed the linguistic debate. See K. Kouroudis, *To Periodiko Kochlias* (Athens: Biliato, 1997), p. 33. The Athenian wing, however, maintained the nationalistic elements (light, sun and in general geoclimatic factors in association with the national spirit). Tziouvas relates this to the promotion of the image of the national poet, e.g. Seferis. Similarly, he observes that Seferis is torn between orality and textuality, see Tziouvas, *Greek Modernism and Beyond*, pp. 32-33.

prism of this double treatment of signification: mental elaboration and psychological profundity.

The focus on language games, word play and structural intricacies within the text fascinated especially those authors who took part in the translation of *U*.⁴⁹ Both the sound of the word and its etymological origins were to be employed within the mobility of a language which would convey a multiplicity of signification. The symbolic meaning of language and myth was to be related to what Joyce did with language. Punning and language games maintained the multiplicity of interpretation bearing on both conscious and unconscious processes. Elements of this double handling of language can be found in two of the Greek authors discussed in this thesis, the exception being Xefloudas

As the introverted novel transfers its content from human beings to aesthetics and art, language itself is thematized. It becomes animated through its presentation as erotic desire, sexual intercourse, incest, generation, and the dying process. In *U*, we get such an account of language not only in the episode of the 'Oxen of the Sun' where language is delivered as a new-born baby, but in the whole adventure of the logos, theorized, parodied, mocked, diluted and recreated. We encounter similar issues or practices in the Greek authors influenced by *U*. The semi-parodic, semi-serious treatment of consubstantiality and of the Holy Trinity as a source of the creation of logos in Pentzikis is but one example.

The emphasis on the copulative character of art, on its androgynous progenitor, and on the corporeality underlying language and aesthetics, all of which derived from the Joycean parody of the doctrine of the Trinity, generated a focus on the material properties of language. The approach, then, to the inner self sought to reveal desire, sexuality and the bodily functions in general as involved in the process of writing and hidden behind the fabric of the text. By scrupulously analysing and eventually dissecting presentations of

⁴⁹ Pentzikis and G. Kitsopoulos give evidence for this experience in their interviews published in Kouroudis, *To Periodiko Kochlias*, p. 52.

human reality, the text came to speak for all inner processes underlying artistic creativity, and to reveal the body's voice suppressed under the conventions of narrative and language.

1.3. The Body in the Text

Joyce's use of the body and its functions during the course of one day in the life of his modern Odysseus proved to be an exemplary enterprise for the Greek authors.⁵⁰ All three of the authors in this study employ the body and its functions in the narrative as a locus for various manifestations of psychic operations, from sexual and sensual desire to psychosomatic disturbance encompassing narrative and language. The focus on the body and its functions came to be part of the exploration of the culturally constructed inward processes of the modern individual. Underpinned by both Joyce's ambiguous psychological realism and the achievements of divergent psychological theories, such as those of Bergson and Freud, the body's use in the text functioned as a backdoor to the text's polyphonic dynamics.

Joyce's modernist dissections of reality, identity, aesthetics and especially his unique use of language, either in language games or as a fluid discourse eroding grammar and syntax, fascinated the Greek authors and reinforced the reception of his work under the influence of psychoanalysis and surrealism.⁵¹ This interpretation by the Greeks was also fostered by the encyclopedic character of the book and its ability to encompass 'all in all'. This capacity for totalizing was another attractive idea which prospered in the theoretical thinking about the novel as genre, as in the cases of Xefloudas and Pentzikis .

⁵⁰ We refer to Xefloudas and Pentzikis, and Cheimonas.

⁵¹ This, however, appears rather later than the thirties, around the fifties and sixties in texts like Xefloudas's *Odysseas* (written 1966-67, pub. 1974), Pentzikis's *Pragmatognosia* (1950) and *To Mythistorema tis Kyrias Ersis* (1966) and in critical essays by the same authors, such as Xefloudas's *To Synchrone Mythistorema* (1955), Pentzikis's *Pros Ekklesiasmo* (1970) and *Idaton Iperekheilisi* (1990).

However, these Greek authors did not conceive of *U* either as a psychological novel or as a surrealistic experiment. They viewed the dissections of *U* as the microcosmic rendition of a macrocosm, inextricably dependent on the psychological processes of the human consciousness and its unconscious intersections.⁵² Their insistence on such a reception of Joyce's work derived both from their own point of view of how a novel should function and their comprehension of the Joycean paradigm, namely the polysemic and multilevelled conveyance of meaning that *U* itself enacts. Xefloudas gives the following account of Joyce's *U*.

Like Proust, Joyce created an entirely new kind of novel. With Proust, the novel was almost outside man, in his attempt to project himself onto the world. Now [with Joyce] it is entirely within the man's head, with no access to the universe. [...] One person, in his endless Dedalean insignificant life, unravels a tremendous epic which uniquely reverberates within the walls of his skull. (*To Synchrono Mythistorema*, p. 62)

Joyce's treatment of reality furnished the Greek authors with this literary model which would lead their work beyond the boundaries of realism. His presentation of the random details of everyday life, always pertinent to the hero's perception as well as to the time and the place of his wanderings, his unique way of simultaneously employing and dismissing reality, supplied them with the means to create the introverted novel. It offered a novel that would avoid the one-to-one correspondence of the fictitious fact to the real one and, without dismissing reality, would foreground the subject's inner processes of absorbing and digesting the external world.

Xefloudas recognizes in *U* a modern style of handling the relationship of man with the world, one which accords with the achievements of the then new psychology.

U is, we could say, an encyclopaedic epic of one person, a work which makes us recall the great authors of the Renaissance and their will to express life as a whole. Yet what Joyce adds, after the

⁵² Pentzikis and Cheimonas are the most characteristic cases. In the former this idea accords with his theological concept of unity, which is very close to Joyce's aesthetic principle of wholeness deriving from Aquinas's theory (*P*, p. 184).

Renaissance, is the exploration of the depth of ego. And in this, the author of *U* occupies the first position in this new psychology which is the most common characteristic of international contemporary literature and which opens it up to a future full of adventures and achievements. (Ibid, p. 65-66)

Xefloudas is obviously speaking about a psychoanalytic operation underlying *U*. And yet, Nikolareizis, a critic of this period, as early as in 1938, criticizes Xefloudas for not being as Freudian as Joyce in his use of interior monologue, leaving 'the most essential vessel of interior monologue, the unconscious, hermetically sealed'.⁵³ Similarly, Pentzikis, who approaches Joyce from a Freudian angle, meditating on myth creation and artistic subjectivity, argues:

But if the notion of myth and its creation causes a multitude of voices to emerge from thought, none of them can remove me from my dizziness. [...] While we imagine that with psychoanalysis or with various methods of interference in the cerebral we not only know how to read thought but we also intervene in it at will [...]. They tell us to reveal our secret and it turns out well. But straight away in another of the egos (from that multitude that Freud enumerated) isn't it true that another secret is created [...]? Perhaps by thoroughly researching himself Rimbaud felt that he escaped himself and said the famous: *Je est un autre*? Or doesn't perhaps the greatest author of our time [Joyce], analysing all the phases and the facts of thought, in such a way that you think he has said everything, and you find nothing to add beyond Joyce, so that behind the effigies of the persons he moves, he reveals his very self, integral, fortified within the most harsh and impenetrable irony?⁵⁴

There is no evidence, known to us, that the Greek authors were aware of Joyce's hostility towards psychoanalysis. However, this does not lead to any misunderstanding in their reading. On the contrary, as we shall see later, their reading and espousal of Joyce's

⁵³ 'However, we owe the idea of interior monologue, with the particular content it possesses today in our literary consciousness, to *Freudian authors like James Joyce*; I also include all those who wrote with a presentiment of Freudianism, authors who surpassed the easily accessible levels of the human psyche, not stopping at the skin of inwardness but reaching deeper into the core, where a primeval absurdity resides. [...] Of course, none of those elements, all deriving from the same principle, exists in Xefloudas's work; *the most essential vessel of interior monologue, the unconscious, remains hermetically sealed*' (my emphases). In Dimitris Nikolareizis, 'To Mythistorema ton Neon ke i Paradosi tou Esoterismou', *Neoellinika Grammata*, spring, 1938, reprinted in *Dokimia Kritikis* (Athens: Plethron, 1983), pp. 183-207 (p. 196).

⁵⁴ Pentzikis, *Pros Ekklesiasmo* (Salonica: Patriarchichon Idrima Paterikon Meleton, 1970), pp. 10-11.

endeavour might contribute, together with other points of view, to the already exhaustive psychoanalytic approaches to Joyce's work. This is especially the case because certain motifs of *U*, such as wandering, incest, the shifting of gender, and metamorphosis, to mention but a few which bear certain psychological insinuations, are also found in abundance in the Greek authors.

Recent psychoanalytic criticism has highlighted Joyce's exploitation of Freud's theories. Apart from psychoanalytic approaches to Joyce's work, from critics such as Brivic, Schechner, Cixous and others, Ellmann seems to be one of the first to discuss Joyce's relation to both Freudian and Jungian psychoanalysis. Joyce possessed in his Trieste library a copy of the 1911 German translation of Ernest Jones's *Hamlet and Oedipus*.⁵⁵ Kidd gives evidence that Joyce had read, and made notes on his personal copy, the 1917 edition of Freud's *Zur Psychopathologie des Alltagslebens*.⁵⁶ Jean Kimball gives us important evidence of Joyce's awareness of Otto Rank's publications on the incest motif in poetry, in the first years of his residence in Zurich (1915-1918), when he did his research on *Hamlet* for his writing of 'Scylla and Charybdis' (during 1918-19).⁵⁷ This chapter is of great importance for the aesthetics of *Ulysses* and for its impact on the Greek authors we are examining, especially Pentzikis and Cheimonas. Joyce was evidently well informed about Freudian psychology and psychoanalysis *per se*.

⁵⁵ Richard Ellmann, *The Consciousness of James Joyce* (London: Faber & Faber, 1977), p. 109.

⁵⁶ John Kidd mentions that 'John Rodker, backer of the second printing of *U*, made for the Egoist Press of London, gives evidence that Joyce 'commented that the name Joyce meant the same thing in English as Freud in German'. Ellmann adds that the name comparison was 'a remark he usually left to his friends' [...] Freud himself wrote about this signifying surname in *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1911), of which Joyce possessed a copy of the 1917 edition' (p. 82), in 'Joyce and Freud: "Only namesakes"', *JJQ*, 22 (1984) 81-83.

⁵⁷ Jean Kimball, 'James Joyce and Otto Rank: The incest motif in *Ulysses*', *JJQ*, 13 (1976), 366-382. In Kimball's article, Ellmann's information that Joyce 'drew upon his lecture on Hamlet in Trieste, supplemented by a good deal of further reading' shows that this 'further reading' includes Otto Rank's extensive publications on the issue of incest. Otto Rank had been Freud's secretary for ten years. Kimball argues for Joyce's early encounter with these psychoanalytic texts and shows how both the Freudian and the Jungian aspects of family relationships have been exploited in *P* and *U*, in 'Jung's "Dual Mother" in Joyce's *U*: An illustrated Psychoanalytic Intertext', *Journal of Modern Literature*, 17 (1994), 477-490.

Psychoanalysis has been viewed with restraint and even hostility by modernist authors.⁵⁸ But Joyce, with his ostentatious opposition and his disguised exploitation of certain elements of this field, displays a uniquely ingenious way of handling the issue: the enormous attempt to infiltrate unconscious processes through conscious awareness. He could ‘psoakoonaloose myself any time I want’ (*FW*, 522.34). Joyce believed that he could “psoakoonaloose” himself any time he wanted because all inner processes deployed in his narrative obey the rules of this conscious endeavour, namely the control and the exploitation of the unconscious within his text. As Joyce has proved his enormous ability to ingest and transform textual material within his work, one could assume that it would be impossible to ignore such an important cultural context of his time. Most of the early psychoanalytic criticism of Joyce bases its conclusions on well-known Freudian terms, such as the Oedipus complex, incest and sexuality, slips of the tongue, the association of ideas, dreams, *parapraxes* and in general the intrusion of the unconscious into the text. In the same vein the Greek authors ‘read’ through, and/or under, the text to the psychological substratum permeating and supporting its psychological patterns (e.g. the wandering motif, quest for the father, incest and prohibition, metamorphoses and dream) and narrative techniques (interior monologue, stream of consciousness). Pentzikis, the most exemplary case in point, and the Greek author who most overtly aligns his work with Joyce’s, employs all these literary motifs. He also, in a more conspicuous Freudian mode, refers to art as a therapeutic means, an idea mostly exploited by Cheimonas’s texts.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ D. H. Lawrence, Eliot and Joyce viewed psychoanalysis with hostility, basically because of its view of artistic creativity as a symptomatic form of the return of repressed desires. See Freud, ‘Creative Writers and Day-dreaming’ in *Sigmund Freud: Art and Literature* (London: Penguin, 1990), pp. 129-141.

⁵⁹ ‘In the newspaper *Nea Alitheia*, they wrote a front-page article under the title “Frenovlavia” (Insanity) characterizing my writing and me insane. Well, you see I am a victor of insanity [...],’ an interview in 1978, entitled ‘Pote den tha Gino Logotechnis’, *Diavazo*, 11 (1978), reprinted in N. G. Pentzikis, *Idaton Iperekcheilisi* (Salonica: Paratiritis, 1990), pp. 192-210 (p. 208). Compare this with Joyce’s confession about the writing of *U* that, ‘That book was a terrible risk. A transparent leaf separates it from madness’, in Jacques Mercanton, ‘The hours of James Joyce’, in *Portraits of the Artist in Exile: Recollections of James Joyce by Europeans*, ed. Willard Potts (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1979), p. 226.

In Joyce's dissections of the solid world, and transparent rendition of the human body enveloping all inner processes, the Greek authors found a model for the long-term quest for introspection. This dual vision could focus on the external world while simultaneously seeing through its solidity. It suggested an unwitting spirit permeating the action of the character, albeit tied to the artist's aesthetic volition.⁶⁰ This dissecting view of reality and man focused on the human body and its functions as a substantial element of this artistic endeavour underpinning narrative and language. It furnished the Greek authors with the prototype they sought: a novel which, without abandoning reality, would explore 'the depth of the ego'.⁶¹ Along with the inner processes revealed by interior monologue, and the flow of language in the form of the Freudian free association and dream, the Greek authors 'read' in the Joycean text an overt presentation of the body and its functions. They read both metaphorically and physically the substratum upholding and permeating the narrative and the language of *U*.

In 1932, Piniatoglou compares D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* with Joyce's *U*.⁶² He highlights the sensual and sexual boldness of both books, the body being the shared ground despite the obviously different standpoints of the two authors. The issue of sexual desire in language and narrative is a preoccupation of all three Greek authors. They either maintain (Xefloudas) or even ground (Pentzikis, Cheimonas) their narrative and language in the body and its functions. Xefloudas's *Odyseas* is a text which aspires to be in line with Joyce's *U* but hardly achieves this. It thematizes all the techniques of introversion: the reactivation of the Odysseus myth and its association with the inward adventure, as well as the microscopic focus on reality, interior monologue, desire in language. Yet the body sustains the disclosure of inner experience only metaphorically, with a naïve and descriptive

⁶⁰ A more complete account of this dual perspective in Joyce's aesthetics occurs in M. Bell, 'Introduction: modern movements in literature' in *The Context of English Literature 1900-1930*, pp. 4 -16.

⁶¹ Xefloudas, *To Synchrone Mythistorema*, p. 56.

⁶² L. Piniatoglou, 'To Vivlio tou Aesthesiasmou', *Makedonikes Imeres*, 4 (1932-33), 46-52. The focus is on Lawrence but the issue of the body is expanded to both authors and links sexual desire with the subversion of Christian morality

presentation of desire, sexuality and blending of gender roles. Sexual desire motivates the mythic hero to abandon his heroic past and to engage in 'human' reality. Calypso's seduction of the hero, in contrast to the Homeric myth, causes his departure from myth to the reality of a modern world in which the sensual body preserves a mythic sexual dimension. Unbridled sexual desire generates a shifting of gender and the merging of the lovers' voices in an interplay that obliterates the boundaries of sexual difference. Odysseus's destination, like Bloom's, is the female body, Calypso's sensual body. In fact Xefloudas's text is imbued with sensuality and sexuality, foregrounding in language the existential anxiety of the alienated modern man.

The use of the human body is the most essential characteristic of Pentzikis's writing. In his book *Mitera Thessaloniki* (1970) he enacts the mapping of his body on to his native city. Here is a characteristic excerpt:

'Behind my left ear on the temple and at the base of the occipital bone where, if struck, our life is endangered, there is the central cemetery with its trees, the Jewish graves, the Turkish, and the sarcophagi of Hellenistic times'.⁶³

Pentzikis, who acknowledges his indebtedness to Joyce, views Joyce's endeavour as an 'emptying out of his ego almost in the same way that the Egyptian embalmers used to empty the corpses to preserve the mummy, residence of KA [...]' (*Kyria Ersi*, p.157). Ka is an Egyptian goddess who, being any person's double, found residence in the embalmed corpse of the deceased. Pentzikis, like Xefloudas who believed that Joyce imparted himself to the characters of his novel and dissolved himself in language, understands the emptying of the ego as the emptying of the human body.⁶⁴ At the same time its employment as a corpse sustains his cardinal literary motif of death and resurrection. This metaphor welds together all the threads of Pentzikis's contradictory ideas, philosophical, religious,

and hypocrisy.

⁶³ *Mitera Thessaloniki* (1970) p. 30.

⁶⁴ Xefloudas, *To Synchrono Mythistorema*, p. 60.

psychological, scientific, and literary. All three authors, Xefloudas, Pentzikis and Cheimonas, exhibit a strong psychosomatic propensity permeating their texts either as sexuality or as narrative confession upholding the aesthetics of the process of writing or as the material supporting the language game.

Xefloudas imbues his text with the thrills experienced by the author during the process of writing (*Ta Tetradia tou Pavlou Foteinou*), a confession in the tradition of French symbolism.⁶⁵ His *Odysseus* subsequently builds its plot on the unrestrained sexuality and fantasies of Odysseus and Calypso. Odysseus's body seems to have lived in antiquity only as an effigy. It becomes activated and animated in modernity only through erotic desire and regressive sexuality. In Pentzikis, the thematization of the aesthetic consciousness permeates the process of rewriting Drosinis's *Ersi*. His narrator's adventures are all written on the body in a suggested recovery of the grotesque sustained by the devices of dream and metamorphosis. Aesthetics, characters, narrative, and language games are all entwined with the bodily functions. In Cheimonas, language is the locus in which the bodily and psychic disturbance finds an outlet. The extraordinary and uncanny behaviour of his 'characters' is accompanied by a strong psychosomatic illness or fantasy which draws upon Beckett's anti-novels. For him, normative language bears the psychosomatic symptoms of repressed desire and that is the reason why his writing endorses malformed syntax, grammar and weird word-formation. This writing aims at liberating the body's voice, and aspires to be in line with the prodigal language of *FW*. All three authors perceive Joyce's language as a materialization that links the word with the flesh, associating the utterance with bodily functions. The bodily substratum of both the narrative and the language becomes more evident in Pentzikis and Cheimonas, both conversant with medicine, the former being a botanist and pharmacist and the latter a psychiatrist.

⁶⁵ Kristeva discusses Mallarmé's psychosomatic thrills as manifested in *Igitur*, showing the sexuality underlying the texture of the poems, in relation to Mallarmé's claim that madness is a useful thing, in *Revolution in Poetic Language*, pp. 226-34.

Joyce himself had been a student of medicine for one year in Paris. Jones, in an article dealing with the relation between medicine and literature, ranks Joyce among the physician-writers.⁶⁶ Sidney Monas also reads *U* as 'a celebration of the ensouled body'.⁶⁷ E. L. Epstein considers 'Joyce almost alone among the novelists, (who) seem to consider it necessary to describe even the most embarrassing bodily functions as matter suitable for literature'.⁶⁸

Joyce himself emphasized the importance of the human body in his art in the schemes he sent to Carlo Linati on 21 September 1920.⁶⁹ In the schemes, each chapter of *U* corresponds to a certain organ and bodily function according to the time of day, as well as to certain arts, sciences or techniques which support his narrative. Kidneys, skin, heart, lungs, oesophagus, brain, blood, ears, muscles, bones, eyes, nose, uterus, the locomotor apparatus, the skeleton, nerves, juices (fluids) and fat, all support the Joycean text. This unique conception, which enacts a sort of physiology of the text, precedes any psychoanalytic approach to literature as the outcome of certain neurotic or psychotic symptoms. Of course, Joyce's intention is far from psychoanalytic. However, his unique way of keeping the body's functions inextricably related with the progress of his narrative is based on the correspondence of the text to a live human body. His heroes' psychological and somatic operations, as well as the aesthetics of his text - aesthetic theory, the act of writing, language games - follow this analogy. At first sight the parallelism of the schemes seems to be arbitrary. And it is only within the texture of the narrative and the nuances of language that we can discover the analogies conveyed by

⁶⁶ Anne Hudson Jones, 'Literature and Medicine: Traditions and Innovations', *The Body and the Text*, 22 (1990), 11-24 (p. 16).

⁶⁷ Sidney Monas, 'Literature, Medicine, and the Celebration of the Body in Rabelais, Tolstoy and Joyce', *The Body and the Text*, 22 (1990), 57-75.

⁶⁸ E. L. Epstein, 'J. J. and the body', in *A Starchamber Quiry, A James Joyce Centennial Volume 1882-1982* (London: Methuen, 1982), pp. 71-106 (p. 73).

⁶⁹ Ellmann, *'Ulysses' on the Liffey* (London: Faber and Faber, 1972), p. 187. In late 1921, a second revised scheme was sent to Valéry Larbaud who was about to lecture on the still unpublished book. D. Mentzelos was aware of this lecture. See 'O Esoterikos Monologos', *Kyklos*, 4 (1933), 163-168. However, as we have no evidence that the Greek authors were informed of the schemes themselves we must limit our argument to their textual representation of the body under the Joycean impact.

the schemes, which are dictated by Joyce's aesthetic theory, based on Aquinas, of the relation of the part to the whole.

In *Stephen Hero*, Joyce had already viewed art in close relation to the human body and its instinctual impulses. Through Stephen's aesthetic perspective modernity is defined as follows:

The modern spirit is vivisective. Vivisection is the most modern process one can conceive. The ancient spirit accepted phenomena with a bad grace. The ancient method investigated the law with the lantern of justice, morality with the lantern of revelation, art with the lantern of tradition [...]. The modern method examines its territory by the light of day [...]. If you were an esthetic philosopher you would take note of all my vagaries because here you have the spectacle of the esthetic instinct in action. (My emphasis, SH, p. 190)

All the bodily functions and metaphors encountered in *U* reflect Stephen's 'vivisective' spirit of modernity. At the same time his 'aesthetic instinct in action' points both to a psychological and to a bodily substratum of creativity.

Without claiming any influence of Joyce's schemes on the Greek authors, their reading of *U* shows an intense preoccupation with the body and its functions. The body's impact on the texture of the narrative, its representation in the corporeality of language derives, as will be seen, from the Joycean theological subversion of the doctrine of the Trinity and its debasement into a family triangle sustaining the view of art and the androgynous artist as developed in Stephen's 'jocoserious' theories about Shakespeare and 'postcreation' (*U*, 14:290-312).

Joyce's bodily metaphors all arise from a mockery of philosophical and theological concepts. This metaphoricity, subversive of all abstraction and mentality, causes the Greek authors to recognize in Joyce's language a materiality bearing on the corporeal element. Xefloudas's opinion that 'Joyce starts with the concept that the word is matter', is also

shared by Pentzikis and Cheimonas.⁷⁰ As the body occupies a prevalent role in Joyce and his Greek followers, we will discuss its function both within the Joycean text and in its Greek reception.

The body in the text will therefore be examined in relation to Joyce's aesthetics. It is manifest in his wit and humour, in his parody of the scientific spirit and of artistic creativity; in aesthetic rapture and the act of writing, and finally in the transformation of sexual/gender identities in the process of making art.

1. 4. Conclusion

Joyce's impact on the Greek authors discussed in this study is associated with the historical moment of renewal of Greek literature. This renewal is seen in its openness to Anglo-Saxon modernism, and to European thought at the beginning of the century, including anthropology, Bergson's theories, psychoanalysis and phenomenology. The result of this shift was the development of a novel which focused on the process of novel-making and disclosed the inner self of modern man. This was the introverted novel. The attempt at renewal flourished in certain authors of the Salonica School and Joyce's work influenced at least two of its main representatives, namely Xefloudas and Pentzikis. Cheimonas, who derives from this movement, bears certain elements of Joyce's influence reworked in a post-modern context. *U*'s narrative techniques of introspection befitted the Greek quest for a novel that would explore man's inner self. Part of the introspective bias of the novel was an interest in the body in the text. *U* and its reception, along with a new set of formal innovations deriving from Europe, including Freudian thought and surrealist experimentation, generated this interest. This context gave credit to the body's presence in the text in both a metaphorical and literal way. As the body and its functions occupy a central role in Joyce and the Greek authors, we will examine its impact on the text's

⁷⁰ Xefloudas, *To Synchrono Mythistorema*, p. 63.

meaning and modes of signification, as well as the possibilities it offers for contemporary hermeneutics.

CHAPTER TWO

LINATI SCHEMA										GORMAN-GILBERT PLAN	
Title	Time	Colour	Persons	Technic	Science, Art	Sense (Meaning)	Organ	Symbol	Correspondences	Variants from Linati schema	
1. DAWN											
1 Telemachus	8-9	Gold White	Telemachus Antinoos (Mentor Pallas The Suitors Penelope (Muse)	3-and 4 – person dialogue Narration Soliloquy	Theology	The dispossessed son in struggle	–	Hamlet, Ireland Stephen	Stephen-Telemachus- Hamlet: Buck Mulligan – Antinoos: Milkwoman – Mentor	Scene: The Tower Hour: 8 a.m. Symbol: Heir Technic: Narrative (young)	
2 Nestor	9-10	Chestnut	Nestor Telemachus Pisistratus Helen	2-person dialogue Narration Soliloquy	History	The wisdom of the old world	–	Ulster, Woman, Common Sense	Deasy – Nestor: Pisistratus – Sargent: Helen – Mrs. O' Shea	Scene: The school Hour: 10 a.m. Colour: Brown Symbol: Horse Technic: Catechism (personal)	
3 Proteus	10-11	Blue	Proteus Menelaus Helen Megapenthes Telemachus	Soliloquy	Philology	Prima materia (ΠΡΟΤΕΥΣ)	–	Word, Signature, Moon, Evolution, Metamorphosis	Proteus-Prima-Matter: Kevin Egan-Menelaus: Megapenthes – The Cocklepickers	Scene: The Strand Hour: 11 a.m. Colour: Green Technic: Monologue (male)	
II. MORNING											
1(4) Calypso	8-9	Orange	Calypso (Penelope 'wife') Ulysses Callidike	2-person dialogue Soliloquy	Mythology	The departing traveller	The Kidneys	Vagina, Exile, Family, Nymph, Israel in bondage	Calypso –The Nymph, Dlugacz: The Recall: Zion-Ithaca	Scene: The House Hour: 8 a.m. Art: Economics Symbol: Nymph Technic: Narrative (mature)	
2(5) Lotus-Eaters	9-10	Brown	Eurylochus Polites Ulysses Nausicaa (2)	Dialogue Soliloquy Prayer	Chemistry	The Seduction of the Faith	Skin	Host, Penis in Bath, Foam, Flower: Drugs: Castration: Oats	Lotus-eaters-Cab-horses, Communists, Soldiers, Eunuchs, Bather, Watchers of Cricket	Scene: The bath Hour: 10 a.m. Organ: Genitals Art: Botany, chemistry Colour: None Symbol: Eucharist Technic: Narcissism	

3(6) Hades	11-12	Black White	Ulysses Elpenor Ajax Agamemnon Hercules Eriphyle Sisyphus Orion Laertes etc. Prometheus Cerberus Tiresias Hades Proserpina Telemachus Antinoos	Narration Dia- logues		Descent to Nothing	Heart	Cemetery: Sa- cred Heart: The past: The Unknown Man: The Un- conscious: Heart trouble: Relics: Heartbreak	Dodder, Grand and Royal Canals, Liffey – The 4 Rivers: Cunningham - Sisyphus: Father Coffey – Cerberus: Caretaker – Hades: Daniel O' Connell – Hercules: Dignam – Elpenor: Parnell – Agamemnon Mentlox – Ajax	Scene: The Graveyard Hour: 11 a.m. Art: Religion Symbol: Caretaker Technic: Incubism
N O O N										
4(7) Aeolus	12-1	Red	Aeolus Sons Telemachus Mentor Ulysses (2)	Simbouleutike [deliberative ora- tory] Dikanike [forensic oratory] Epideictic [public oratory] Tropes	Rhetoric	The Mockery of Victory	Lungs	Machines: Wind: Hunger: Stag: Beelle: Failed Destinies: Press: Mutability	Crawford – Aeolus: Incest – Journalism: Floating Island – Press	Scene: The Newspaper Hour: 12 noon Symbol: Editor Technic: Enthy- memic
5(8) Lestrygonians	1-2	Blood colour	Antiphates The seductive daughter Ulys- ses	Peristaltic Prose	ARCHITEC- TURE	Dejection	Esopha- gus	Bloody sacrifice: Foods: shame	Antiphates – Hunger: The Decoy: Food: Lestrygonians - Teeth	Scene: The Lunch Hour: 1 noon Colour: None Symbol: Consta- bles
6(9) Scylla and Cha- rybdis	2-3	–	Scylla and Cha- rybdis Ulysses Telemachus Antinoos	Whirlpools	Literature	Two-edged dilemma	Brain	Hamlet, Shake- speare, Christ, Socrates, Lon- don and Strat- ford, Scholasti- cism and Mysti- cism, Plato and Aristotle, Youth and Maturity	The Rock – Aristotle, Dogma, Stratford: The Wiripool – Plato, Mys- ticism, London: Ulys- ses – Socrates, Jesus, Shakespeare	Scene: The Li- brary Hour: 2 p.m. Symbol: Stratford – London Technic: Dialectic
D A Y (Anti – wings, umbilicus finished)										
7(10) Wandering Rocks	3-4	Rainbow	Objects Places Forces Ulysses	Labyrinth moving between two banks	Mechanics	The Hostile Environment	blood	Christ and Cae- sar: Errors: Homo- nyms: Synchro- nizations: Re- semblances	Bosporus – Liffey: European Bank – Viceroy: Asiatic Bank– Connree: Symple- gades – Groups of Citizens	Scene: The streets Hour: 3 p.m. Colour: None Symbol: Citizens Technic: Labyrinth

8(11) Sirens	4-5	Coral	Leucothea Parthenope Ulysses Orpheus Menlaus The Argonauts	Fuga per Canonem	Music	The Sweet Cheat	Ear	Promises: Femi- nism: Sounds: Embellishments	Sirens – Barnmaids Isle – bar	Scene: The Con- cert Room Hour: 4 p.m. Colour: None Symbol: Barnmaids
9(12) Cyclops	5-6	Green	Prometheus No one (1) Ulysses Galatea	Alternating asym- metry	Surgery	The Egocidal Terror	(1) Mus- cles (2) Bones	Nation: State: Religion: Dy- nasty: Idealism: Exaggeration: Fanaticism: Collectivity	Noman – 1: Stake – cigar Challenge – apotheo- sis	Scene The laver Hour: 5 p.m. Organ: Muscle Art: Politics Symbol: Fenian Technic: Gigan- lism
10(13) Nausicaa	8-9	Grey	Nausicaa Handmaidens Alcinooos Arete Ulysses	Retrogressive progression	Painting	The Projected Mirage	Eye Nose	Onanism: Fe- male: Hypocrisy	Phaeacia – Star of the Sea: Gerly – Nausicaa	Scene: The Roc Hour: 8 p.m. Colour: Grey, blind Symbol: Virgin Technic: Tumescence, delumescence
11(14) Oxen of the Sun	10-11	White	Lampetie Phaethusa Helios Hyperion Jove Ulysses	Prose (Embryo – Foetus – Birth)	Physic	The Eternal Flocks	Matrix Uterus	Fecundation, frauds, parthe- nogenesis	Hospital – Trinacria: Lampetie, Phaethusa – Nurses: Helios – Home Oxen – Fertility Crime – Fraud	Scene: The Hos- pital Hour: 10 p.m. Organ: Womb Art: Medicine Symbol: Mothers Technic: Embry- onic development
12(15) Circe	11-12	Violet	Circe The Beasts Telemachus Ulysses Hermes	Vision animated to bursting point	Dance	The Man Hating Orc	Locomotor apparatus Skeleton	Zoology: per- sonification: pantheism: magic: poison: antidote:reel	Circe – Bella	Scene: The Brothel Hour: 12 midnight Art: Magic Colour: None Symbol: Whore Technic: Halluci- nation
III. MIDNIGHT (Fusion of Bloom and Stephen) (Ulysses and Telemachus)										
1(16) Eumaeus	12-1	–	Eumaeus Ulysses Telemachus The Bad Shepherd Ulysses Pseudangelos	Relaxed prose		The Ambush at Home	Nerves		Eumaeus – Skin the Goat: Sailor – Ulysses Pseudangelos: Melanthius – Corley	Scene: The Shel- ter Hour: 1 a.m. Art: Navigation Symbol: Sailor Technic: Narrative (old)

2(17) Ilhaca	1-2	starry milky	Ulysses Telemachus Eurycleia The Suitors	Dialogue Pacified style Fusion		The Armed Hope	Juices		Eurymachus Boylan; Suitors – scruples; Bow – reason	Scene: The House Hour: 2 a.m. Organ: Skeleton Art: Science Symbol: Comets Technic: Cate- chism (imper- sonal)
3(18) Penelope	∞	Starry Milky <i>then</i> new dawn	Laertes Ulysses Penelope	Monologue Resigned style		The Past Sleeps	Fat		Penelope – Earth; Web – Movement	Scene: The Bed Hour: None Symbol: Earth Technic: Mono- logue (female)
<div>DEEP NIGHT</div> <div>Ulysses (Bloom)</div> <div>DAWN</div> <div>Telemachus (Stephen)</div>										

Reproduced from Richard Ellmann's *Ulysses on the Liffey*

Chapter Two: The Joycean paradigm

2. 1. The Aesthetic Consciousness

U challenged meaning and interpretation in a way that no other novel had done before. Diverse discourses, literary motifs and archetypal patterns engage in its little story of a single day. Its encyclopedic vein and its dissections of reality set the terms for a new orientation in the novel and in critical theory. Joyce offers us an idea of this multilevelled organization and heterogeneity through the schemes underpinning the structure of *U*:

It is the epic of two races (Israel-Ireland) and at the same time the cycle of the human body as well as a little story of a day (life). [...] It is also a kind of encyclopaedia. My intention is not only to render the myth *sub specie temporis nostri* but also to allow each adventure (that is every hour, every organ, every art being interconnected and interrelated in the somatic scheme of the whole) to condition and even to create its own technique. *Each adventure is so to speak one person although it is composed of persons* – as Aquinas relates of the heavenly hosts. (My emphases underlined)¹

Joyce forges his work as a whole, as self-contained as a human body, and reflecting the Thomist aesthetics which Stephen had adumbrated at the end of *P*. The somatic structure of the whole is composed of elements deriving from the two great domains upholding its schemes, namely art and science. These evenly dispersed elements enact the interdisciplinary logic of the text, which invites the most advanced thinking of contemporary epistemology to its interpretation. Eco calls *U* and *FW* epistemological metaphors which transpose ‘the phenomena described by contemporary science’.²

Following the scientific bias of the schemes, this chapter will discuss aspects of meaning and interpretation in *U* in relation to the body. As will be seen, the aesthetics, the comedy, the narrative techniques and the language are all associated with bodily functions. These functions reveal the biological and physical links which underlie the ideas and images.

¹ Letter to Carlo Linati, September 1920, *SL*, p. 271.

² Umberto Eco, *The Aesthetics of Chaosmos: The Middle Ages of James Joyce*, trans. by Ellen Esrock (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), p. 74.

Joyce's conception of the cyclic movement of the body in parallel to his text answers the problem of the relationship between the mental and the somatic with the skill of a physiologist. The aesthetics, humour and wit with which he decks out his physiology sustain the act of creation as an all-encompassing phenomenon of the human being. The varied discourses sustaining the stratified hierarchy of his text highlight its wholeness as a living entity.

From its very opening, *U* undermines the sublime aesthetic suggested by its mythic title. The mockery of a mass at the awakening of the company of young men in the Martello tower is interwoven with family relationships, nationalism, history, theology and aesthetic consciousness. In a Eucharistic parody Mulligan debases the chalice to a shaving bowl, and the Holy Trinity to the three eggs served on a breakfast plate. This scenario introduces a ceaseless movement from lofty to lower material, from abstraction to concreteness, and from the sublime aesthetics of the mental processes to the rudimentary functions of the body.

The book unfolds in the space of one day, and follows the spatio-temporal movement of its heroes from morning to night. Starting with Telemachus 'who does not yet suffer the body', according to the Linati scheme, the narrative of the whole book ends in Molly's liquefied language, accompanied by her menstruation. Thus the entire book moves from an embryonic stage, as Mulligan's breakfast *ab ovo* suggests, to a decayed corporeal condition that is the excretion of a dead ovum in Molly's menstrual blood. The suggested evolutionary process, from genesis to death, conjoins the passing of a day with the cycle of the human body. The constant transference from highly mental elaboration to lower functions of the body sustains the parody. This twofold perspective of the book, of the highly aesthetic and its lowering to the primal bodily material, creates for the reader puzzlement and ambivalence regarding what is serious and what is not. The polyphonic,

polymorphic and polyglottic playfulness of this elusive text challenges the very foundations of the novel, narrative and language itself.

The interweaving of sublime aesthetics with comedy houses a strong psychosomatic propensity sustained by the use of the body. The vitality of the body and its functions uphold not only Joyce's comedy but also his Thomist aesthetics, articulated by Stephen in *P*. This theory was applied to the making of *U*, as Joyce's correspondence with Linati and Gilbert shows (*SL*, p. 271). Two fundamental elements came out of this theory: one concerning the character of the work of art and the other concerning the relation of the creator with his creation. The former highlighted the aesthetics of beauty and the principle of anti-sentimentalization, while the latter stressed the principle of impersonalization, namely the idea of the invisible creator. Yet, in *U*, this philosophical elaboration is developed in parallel to the hierarchical structure of a live organism.

Starting with the question of what is proper or improper art, Stephen draws upon Aristotle's *Poetics* and his definition of the tragic emotion. Stephen, like Joyce, endorses dramatic art and dismisses desire or loathing in art as *kinetic* emotions which belong to improper arts, namely pornographic or didactic. For him, in proper art the emotion is static, 'the mind is arrested and raised above desire and loathing' (*P*, p. 179). In his aesthetic theory, Stephen seems to start from a highly mental elaboration. Art belongs to the intellect, and beauty is beheld by the imagination which is appeased by the most satisfying relations of the sensible. Stephen sanctions Aquinas's axioms for beauty: '*ad pulchritudinem tria requiruntur, integritas, consonantia, claritas*' (*P*, p. 184), that is wholeness, consonance or harmony and clarity or radiance.

Aquinas's theory also accords with Joyce's 'vivisective' spirit of modernity (*SH*, p. 190). The first thing perceived is the totality of one thing as such, the second is the analysis of its wholeness. The harmony of wholeness and its radiance rest upon the fact that it must be apprehended '[...] as balanced part to part within its limits' (*P*, p. 185). This analytic view

entails this thing being not just *one* thing but *a* thing interrelated with other bigger or smaller entities: '[...] complex, multiple, divisible, separable, made up of its parts, harmonious' (*P*, p. 185).

When Stephen explains the scholastic *quidditas* or *whatness* of a thing, the quality of which is felt when the aesthetic image is first conceived in the artistic imagination, he quotes the Italian physiologist Luigi Galvani. This spiritual state of conception is compared to the cardiac condition which Galvani called 'the enchantment of the heart' (*P*, p. 185). Stephen's theory touches upon one of the most crucial theoretical problems concerning human creativity: desire and pleasure. His emphasis on the world of the senses also harks back to the Aquinian '*pulchra enim dicuntur quae visa placent [...] quia sensus delectatur in rebus debite proportionatis, sicut in sibi similibus; nam et sensus ratio quaedam est, et omnis virtus cognoscitiva*'.³ Joyce's 'somatic scheme of the whole' reflects this world of the senses. The interconnection and interrelation of 'every hour, every organ and every art' (*SL*, p. 271) encompasses a physiological structure resting upon the relation of the part to the whole.⁴ This physiological propensity of the schemes is part of the static and contemplative ideas of art which Joyce employs for the making of *U*. The unbiased and impartial representation of physiological functions of the human body throughout *U* accords with Joyce's static versus the kinetic. The static thrives particularly in his comedy and supports his principle of impersonalization based upon a scientific spirit, as will be shown later.

This philosophical contemplation is founded on a twofold frame of reference: one related to philosophy and the other to physiology. In fact, Stephen's version of Aquinas's theory is a reworking of what he called rhythm, namely the relation of the part to the whole and vice

³ 'For those things are called beautiful which please us when they are seen. [...] For the senses delight in rightly proportioned things as similar to themselves, the sense faculty being a sort of proportion itself like all other knowing faculties', *Summa Theologiae*, quoted in Eco, 'The Function and Nature of the Aesthetic *Visio*' in *The Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas*, trans. by Hugh Bredin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), pp. 49-63 (p. 56).

⁴ About the differences between the early Stephen of the *SH* and *P* and the later of *U* see W. T. Noon, 'A Pennyworth of Thomism', in *Joyce and Aquinas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957, repr. Hamden, Conn.: Archon books, 1970). Also in the same book, pp. 86-104, Noon discusses how through comedy Joyce applied the static and contemplative canons of art in his two significant novels *U* and *FW*.

versa. It is through this relation of the part to the whole that a complex hierarchical structure appears as a scaffold for his ideas. The philosophical and aesthetic principles of wholeness, harmony and radiance have a hidden analogy with the hierarchy inherent in any organic entity from the most rudimentary form of life to the human organism.⁵ From a first look in any book of contemporary biology or physiology, one can find that a hierarchical structure founded on the relation of the whole with the part, and vice versa, supports the order of any biological, organic or even inorganic entity from the molecule to the human brain.⁶

Joyce's art anticipates in several ways the scientific achievements of our era, owing to this multi-levelled and 'vivisective' spirit. A principal factor in his artistic endeavour is the connection of his narrative with the human body and its functions; while the parallel array of different fields, such as science, art, and history, anticipates the inter-disciplinary rationale of modern thought as developed in the second half of the twentieth century.

The idea of convergence characterizes many fields of contemporary thought.⁷ A close parallel to Joyce's schemes can be found in Arthur Koestler's theory of creativity as an all-encompassing process extending from physiology and biology to symbolic language. Koestler, an enthusiastic admirer of Joyce, sees the world as an hierarchically structured whole ordered by the inter-relation of the part with the whole. His inter-disciplinary theory, which treats artistic creation and human creativity in general, rests on a theoretical conception which accords almost to the letter with Stephen's theory. Much as Joyce's point

⁵ The term 'hierarchy' is not used here to indicate an authoritarian structure. On the contrary it indicates the autonomous, self-governing relationship between the part and the whole, with varying degrees of flexibility and freedom as in Joyce's schemes.

⁶ For a schematic representation of the organic hierarchy in Arthur Koestler see *Janus: A Summing Up* (London: Hutchinson, 1978), pp. 28-29. Hereafter cited as *Janus*.

⁷ The association of quantum physics with philosophy and language in the beginning of the century is but one example. See Sir James Jeans, *Physics and Philosophy* (Cambridge and New York: Macmillan, 1943). Joyce also used the achievements of modern physics in his work which made Eco characterize *U* as 'an enormous treatise on quantum physics which subdivides its material in the manner of *Summa Theologiae* [...]', (*The Aesthetics of Chaosmos*, pp. 55-56). On modern physics in Joyce, see also W.Y. Tindall, *James Joyce: His Way of Interpreting The Modern World* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1950), pp. 90-94.

of departure is the artistic imagination so Koestler's quest is the act of creation in general, which he develops in *The Act of Creation*, 1964.⁸

Koestler's theoretical model, which he calls 'Holarchy', has the fundamental principle that the world is arranged in a hierarchical structure resembling the organization of a living organism. This hierarchy works over different fields, such as the tree diagram which represents the evolution of species, the anatomist's tree diagram, and the hierarchical structure of the pentagon. His dissecting perception of life on all its levels bears an evident resemblance to the panoramic and encyclopedic organization of *U* in which the body maintains a dominant role. Koestler transcends the traditional philosophical and physical discrimination between the part and the whole, which perceives the part as something fragmentary and incomplete, without an autonomy of its own, and the whole as a sum of parts. 'In its bodily aspects', he writes,

[...] The organism is a whole consisting of 'sub-wholes', such as the circulatory system, the digestive system, etc., which in turn branch into sub-wholes of a lower order [...]; it is a multi-levelled, stratified hierarchy of sub-wholes, which can be conveniently diagrammed as a pyramid or an inverted tree, where the sub-wholes form the nodes, and the branching lines symbolize channels of communication and control [...]. (*Janus*, p. 27)⁹

Likewise, Joyce's schemes are founded on the hierarchical order of a book resembling a living organism, constituted of sub-wholes reflecting Aquinas's axioms of wholeness, harmony, and radiance.¹⁰ This hierarchical structure, starting from the titles of the episodes,

⁸ Koestler's theories are on the crossroads of scientific discovery and artistic inspiration. His ideas have been developed in dialogue with international symposiums of scholars from varied academic disciplines, such as the annual interdisciplinary assembly at the Centre for Advanced Study in the Behavioural Sciences in Stanford, California or the 1968 Alpached Symposium 'Beyond Reductionism - New Perspectives in the Life Sciences'. Joycean scholars such as Robert Bell, and W. T. Noon, often refer to Koestler's theory on humour.

⁹ Koestler's ideas hark back to 19th century organicism, which is another possible influence on Joyce's ideas. In 1860, George Henry Lewes wrote: '*Life is proportional to organisation*. [...] The body is one; all its parts are subordinate; all are bound together in a higher unity. [...] There is unity [...] It is due to organic subordination: all parts are related; all act together by means of the nervous system, as all parts of an army act together by means of officers and discipline', *Physiology of Common Life*, 2 vols (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1860), II, p. 352.

¹⁰ Aquinas's aesthetics encompass also an organic view of the universe. See Eco's comment on Aquinas's *Commentary on the Divine Names*: 'He describes the universe as a gigantic organism which organizes its constitutive forms [...] all engaged in a play of relationships based upon substantial compatibilities both quantitative and qualitative. There is the relationship of the whole to the substantial reality of its constitutive forms, and the mathematical relations which bind them together. There are qualitative relations among genera and species, and a relationship which unifies contraries in genus and in matter. [...] Aquinas tells us, that "all things lead back to

proceeds to time and space, colour, persons, technique, science, bodily organ and symbol, all arrayed in a single pattern supporting the wholeness of the book; a whole in which 'each adventure is so to speak one person although it is composed of persons'.¹¹ In this respect Joyce's ideas have a close analogy with Koestler's hierarchy:

Each member of this hierarchy, on whatever level, is a sub-whole or '*holon*' in its own right - a stable, integrated structure, equipped with self-regulatory devices and enjoying a considerable degree of autonomy or self-government. Cells, muscles, nerves, organs all have their intrinsic rhythms and patterns of activity, often manifested spontaneously without external stimulation. They are subordinate as *parts* to the high centres in the hierarchy, but at the same time they function as quasi-autonomous *wholes*. They are Janus-faced. The face turned upward, toward the higher levels, is that of a dependent part; the face turned downward, towards its own constituents, is that of a whole of remarkable self-sufficiency. (*Janus*, p. 27)¹²

Koestler's Janus principle, as seen in the structure of *U*, fully accords with Joyce's aesthetics, especially with regard to the bodily functions underlying the economy of its text. Each episode-adventure has its own hour, place, art, science, and organ which are interrelated in the structural scheme of the whole. It displays a certain autonomy as well as dependence on the whole.¹³ This Janus-faced relation between the part and the whole pervades *U*. It creates the heterogeneity of its texture as a multi-levelled framework leading to polyphony and multi-signification.

Heterogeneity in *U* has been discussed by psychoanalytic and deconstructive criticism on the ground of multiplicity of meaning.¹⁴ The Lacanian approach, focusing on the language of the unconscious, considers heterogeneity as a result of the unresolved Oedipal

causing of beauty, because they all have to do with consonance" ' (*Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas*, p. 91).

¹¹ *SL*, p. 271.

¹² This is comparable to Lewes's words that: 'There is a life of the parts and a life of the whole organism; each microscopic cell has its independent existence, runs its own career from birth to death; and *the sum- total of such lives* forms what we call the life of the animal: the unity is an aggregate of forces, not one presiding force', (*Physiology of Common Life*, II, p. 353).

¹³ This is an echo of Stephen's words: 'Rhythm, said Stephen, is the first formal esthetic relation of part to part in any esthetic whole or an esthetic whole to its parts or of any part to the esthetic whole of which it is a part' (*P*, p. 180).

¹⁴ Colin MacCabe, *James Joyce and the Revolution of the Word* (London: Macmillan, 1978), and Christine van Boheemen, *The Novel as a Family Romance: Language, Gender, and Authority from Fielding to Joyce* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1987).

trauma.¹⁵ However, this being an interpretation which draws upon Freudian metapsychology, it employs the body only in its symbolic function within the text (either as gender problem or as bodily disturbance). The Lacanian reading treats the problem of language in *U* from a limited philosophical point of view concerning the unconscious.¹⁶ In fact, this approach, in spite of its opposite claims, still rests on the traditional Cartesian dualism of the body and the mind, and the identification of 'mind' with 'conscious thinking'. It fails to see that consciousness is not '*an all-or-nothing affair but a matter of degrees*', as psychophysiology argues.¹⁷ There are not clear borderlines between consciousness and the unconscious. Joyce's claim that he could 'psookoanaloose' himself any time he wanted reflects this view. In a similar vein, deconstruction, which claims to escape the dualism of ontotheology and metaphysics, and to reject the authority of the One, the Father, interprets Joyce's plurality of meaning as the exploitation of 'the gap between world and reality' which allows him to flaunt 'its subversive otherness, coded feminine' (*The Novel as a Family Romance*, p. 41).

Interpretations in line with Lacanian and Derridian thought contain incomplete elements of truth, namely the intrusion of the unconscious into consciousness and its feminine otherness. Yet they ignore the biological rhythm of the text. They fail to see Joyce's claim of 'all in all' and its inextricable relation to the human organism and its functions. The multi-levelled hierarchy which the Joycean text enacts points to a breaking away from the mind-matter dichotomy. Instead, it initiates an ascending and descending spiral mediated by different levels of thought accompanied by biological functions ranging from the highest mental elaboration to the lowest bodily functions.

¹⁵ Its solution would allow the subject's separation from the mother and its entering into the father's symbolic order - language, restoring the equilibrium between normality and abnormality.

¹⁶ See MacCabe on the problem of metalanguage which, he claims, does not exist in *U*, metalanguage being the text outside the inverted commas which secures access to the external world. MacCabe views the language of *U* as a closed mental process which borders on psychotic language.

¹⁷ Arthur Koestler, *The Ghost in the Machine* (London: Hutchinson, 1967), p. 205.

The early Stephen of *P*, even in his endorsement of dramatic form, acknowledges a vitalist characteristic in the act of creation:

The dramatic form is reached when the vitality which has flowed and eddied round each person fills every person with such vital force that he or she assumes a proper and intangible esthetic life. (My emphasis, *P*, p. 187)

The dramatic form is founded on the artist's transfusion of his vitality to each separate character in his work. The idea of the vital force also implies a physical or psychological energy, recalling Bergson's *élan vital*, though without suggesting any theoretical relation between the two concepts. In the 'Proteus' episode of *U*, the same concept is reworked through Aristotle's entelechy linked with meditations on the evolution of life. In the library episode, and in the light of Stephen's incestuous interpretation of transubstantiation and consubstantiality, this transmission of vital force has the bodily value of a blood transfusion. This, as we shall see, becomes also a metaphor for the act of writing with blood in Pentzakis and in Cheimonas.

The vital force transfused to the characters may well absolve the creator from their action and suffering, but the emotion is there, fostering the artistic creation. It is manifested in Joyce's parody, satire, humour, wit, malapropisms, burlesque, and roly-poly farce, all his comedy and derision aiming at laughter. Joyce's comedy is based on the compatibility between the wit of intelligence and what he calls 'the enchantment of the heart'. The Thomist theory of *contemplatio*, propounded in *P*, sanctions emotion that can be intellectually grasped and raised above pathos, without dismissing its effect. On the contrary, this emotion is intellectualized by the impersonal creator and transfused into his characters. The controversial issue of emotion in Joyce's art, viewed from the angle of bodily correspondences, can shed light on psychosomatic functions which smoulder under the humorous creative act.

2.2. The Aesthetics of Comedy and the Comedy of Aesthetics

Loud, heap miseries upon us yet entwine our arts with laughters low!

(FW, 259.7-8)

Ellmann gives evidence of Joyce's early predilection for comedy:

He liked comedy both in its larger sense of negotiating the reconciliation of forces, and in its more immediate sense of provoking laughter. Sympathy and incongruity were his gregarious substitutes for pity and terror. To Joyce tragedy centered on privation, comedy on possession; tragedy on lamentation, comedy on joy. ('*Ulysses*' on the Liffey, p. xi)

Ellmann highlights the polarity between comedy and tragedy and the emotional state pertaining to each of them. Lamentation and laughter, being responses to tragic and comic stimuli respectively, are equally involved with mental and physical processes; they obey certain cognitive and physiological conditions within the hierarchy of the human organism.

For Joyce, laughter is a response with which we reveal ourselves as in his saying 'It should really be *in riso veritas*; for nothing so reveals us as our laughter'.¹⁸ As Jolas relates, he was always astonished that so few people had commented on the comic spirit of his work. But most of all his choice of comedy points to an uncontrollable release of emotion which only partially accords with his *static* idea of aesthetics. Joyce himself immensely enjoyed laughing, and considered his laughter an emotional release.¹⁹ His art bears all the elements of wit, intelligence and spirit but also the explosive dynamics of bodily energy released in laughter.²⁰

¹⁸ Eugene Jolas, 'My friend James Joyce' in Givens, *Two Decades*, p. 8, quoted from William T. Noon, *Joyce and Aquinas*, p. 86.

¹⁹ His wife complained that she couldn't sleep at night because 'Jim is writing at his book [...] I go to bed and then that man sits in the next room and continues laughing about his own writing', in 'An Interview with Carola Giedion-Welker and Maria Jolas', ed. Richard M. Kain, *JJQ*, 11 (1974), 94-122 (p. 96).

²⁰ In a letter to his mother he writes: 'My book of songs will be published in the spring of 1907. My first comedy about five years later. My 'Esthetic' about five years later again. [...] Yeats (who is impressionable) said he knew me only a little time and in that time I had roared laughing at the mention of Balzac, Swinburne [...]. I have more than once upset a whole French cafe by laughing. [...] I was laughing so loudly' (my emphasis, *SL*, p. 19).

Philosophers and psychologists, from Plato and Aristotle to Spencer, Freud and Bergson, have tried to explain the function of laughter. One persistent theory is that of 'degradation'.²¹ Bergson attributes this phenomenon to a 'momentary anaesthesia of the heart'.²² A lack of sympathy and even an element of inherent aggression seem to be recognizable in laughter. Joyce's comedy, as the reversal of any habitual or conventional value, points to a sort of aggressive-defensive attitude mostly expressed in derision and mockery. Joyce's mock-heroic debasing of the genre of epic to a mock-epic, his irony at the expense of the sacred mysteries of the church, and the debunking of politics, nationalism etc., all have the common denominator of the comic. Joyce absolved himself from the blame of aggression by having the citizens harass Bloom or Mulligan mock Stephen. This alleged detachment from emotion supports the element of aggression 'which turns the effect of pathos into bathos, tragedy into comedy'.²³ The intellectualization of emotion, Joyce's *static* emotion, points to the twofold character of his comedy which permeates the whole of his aesthetics: a highly mental elaboration which we will see in the cognitive patterns of his humour but also in the uncontrollable psychodynamics of the unconscious, smouldering under his laughter.

A brief analysis of laughter can indicate its strongly psychosomatic character. Laughter is a bodily response, belonging to and facilitated by the lower stratum (muscular reflex, breathing out - visceral and glandular level) of our organism and yet stimulated by highly mental processes (humour wit - cortex level). In physiology's terms laughter is a pure reflex produced by the coordinate contraction of fifteen facial muscles in a stereotyped pattern and accompanied by altered breathing. Electrical stimulation of the zygomatic major, the main lifting

²¹ It is characteristic of the endless debates on the subject that the bibliography of J. Y. Greig's *Psychology of laughter and comedy*, published in 1923, comprises three hundred and sixty-three titles of works bearing on the subject. See Koestler, *Insight and Outlook* (London: Macmillan, 1949), p. 4.

²² H. Bergson, *Laughter*, trans. by Cloudesley Brereton and Fred Rothwell (London: Macmillan, 1911), p. 5.

²³ Koestler, *Insight and Outlook*, p. 55.

muscle of the upper lip with currents of varying intensity, produce facial expressions ranging from the faint smile through the broad grin, to the contortions typical of explosive laughter.²⁴

However, the significance of laughter, as well as of its opposite reflex, weeping, rests upon the fact that it has no apparent biological utility and is a unique characteristic of *homo sapiens*. Koestler calls it a *luxury* reflex requiring the stimulus of highly complex mental activity.

U is exemplary of this complex mental activity, with its comedy being sustained by all types of humour, from Mulligan's clownish performance of a Mass in the opening through the Circean caricature of the human plight, to the cosmic irony of 'Ithaca'. The intensity of the reader's gradations may fluctuate from smile to roaring laughter.²⁵ The dominant characteristic is the suspension of meaning or the betrayal of the reader's expectation. The reader who expects an epic narrative, to meet with Odyssean heroes, will seek in vain Telemachus or Odysseus or Penelope in the ordinary figures of the narrative. The farrago of the sublime and the trivial makes a readerly labyrinth of this Odyssean narrative. We will presently see some exemplary patterns which highlight the structure of Joyce's comedy with regard to the body.

The subject of aesthetics is raised at least twice more in *U* in Stephen's 'jocoserious' (*U*, 17:369) theorization: in the 'Scylla and Charybdis' incest motif and in the 'Oxen of the Sun' episode. The former is dictated by the 'doctrine' of the androgynous artist and the latter by the concept of 'proliferent continuance' (*U*, 14:15) as expressed in the theory of 'postcreation'. From our point of view these jocoserious theories, which intersect and overlap on the issue of doctrine of the Trinity, function as master metaphors for Joyce's art underlying the making of *U*. They permeate its aesthetics, its comedy, the act of writing and the gender problem. Standing on the borderline of intellectualization and corporeality, these

²⁴ Koestler, *Janus*, p.110. This bodily feature of laughter classifies it as a motor reflex similar to the contraction of the pupil of the eye.

²⁵ As R. Bell points out, '*U* refuses to sanction humour in any categorical way'. Robert H. Bell, 'Types of folly', in *Jocoserious Joyce: the Fate of Folly in 'Ulysses'* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1991), p. 37.

‘theories’ seem to have been espoused by the Greek authors, either in their comical version (Pentzikis) or in their highly symbolical function (Cheimonas) as we shall see in the relevant chapters.

As Stephen develops his incestuous theory of the doctrine of the Trinity, the narrative sustains the logic of a riddle: ‘they talked seriously of mocker’s seriousness’ (*U*, 9:544), ‘Humour wet and dry’ (*U*, 9:536). The prevailing logic of the humour here lies in the antithetical function of two counteracting or mutually incompatible concepts or sequences of thought. Stephen’s presentation of his theory begins in a mild ironical mode which shifts to self-irony, to parody, to ridicule and results in the repeated laughter towards the end of the episode and to Mulligan’s mock literary work, his final answer to Stephen’s theory. Mulligan’s role is quite significant in the episode because he is the catalyst which converts Stephen’s dry humour to his own Rabelaisian wet one.²⁶

Stephen’s theory tries to establish art on the solid ground of human reality. The fabrication of his theory around Shakespeare’s life and work, and his Hamlet-like family romance, is associated with the doctrine of the Trinity. The dryness of his humour rests upon the riddle-type character of this theory: ‘[...] Stephen solved the problem. He proves by algebra that Shakespeare’s ghost is Hamlet’s grandfather’ (*U*, 2:151). Consider the following:

Sabelius, [...], held that the father was Himself His Own Son. [...] Well: if the father who has not a son be not a father can the son who has not a father be a son? When Rutlandbaconsouthamptonshakespeare or another poet of the same name in the comedy of errors wrote *Hamlet* he was not the father of his own son merely but being no more a son, he was and felt himself the father of all his race, the father of his own grandfather, the father of his unborn grandson who, by the same token, never was born, for nature, as Mr Magee understands her, abhors perfection.

(*U*, 9:864-8)

²⁶ Dry humour is told with a serious face, and is often of a riddling character, such as Stephen’s performance of his theory in the episode; wet humour has the overt character of Rabelaisian comedy, and a more conspicuous or immediate reference to the human body, especially to functions of the lower stratum. For a similar classification

The comic effect derives from the riddle-like character of the paragraph which causes two contrasting fields of reasoning to intersect: the dogma of theology and the inductive reasoning of mathematics, producing a mathematical pattern of genealogy. Stephen's dry humour 'portrays' a caricature of the doctrine of the Trinity, by over-emphasizing its human and corporeal aspect of procreation. This exaggeration, absurd from one perspective, stands as an allegory, a 'parable of art'.²⁷ The satiric effect rests upon the appearance of two familiar concepts (Trinity and family story) in a new perspective, through contrast, reversal, and sharp leaps from one sequence to another. This instigates the parodic mimicry to follow. Mulligan – the 'monk', 'Sonmulligan', jester and doctor – initiates the Rabelaisian laughter of the chapter:

-Himself his own father, Sonmulligan told himself. Wait. I am big with child. I have an unborn child in my brain. Pallas Athena! A play! The play's the thing! let me parturiate! He clasped his paunchbrow with both birthaiding hands. (*U*, 9: 875-7)

Mulligan's clownish interference, his scientific and malicious wit, instigates the clash between Stephen's mental theorization and the Rabelaisian body underlying it. He animates by corporeal means the procreative parable of art, mocks aesthetics and theology and eventually transmutes all intellectualization into the humility of human flesh. His Athena coming out of the head is not far from Shem's urinated ink in *FW*, while the bigness of his head points to a hydrocephalic deformity suggested by the amniotic fluid of pregnancy. Mulligan's mimicry shifts the exalted thought to the trivial. Eventually, he writes his own book of art, a final blow against Stephen's androgynous artist, 'being a wife unto himself' (*U*, 9:1051):

-Everyman His Own Wife

or

A Honeymoon in the Hand

between 'Rich and wet humour', see Koestler *Insight and Outlook*, p. 89.

²⁷ Ellmann, 'Ulysses' on the Liffey, p. 85.

(a national immorality in three orgasms)

by

Ballocky Mulligan (U, 9:1171-6)

Stephen's Trinitarian dogma of copulative art is ridiculed by the explicitness of the incestuous and autoerotic physicality of Mulligan's satire. As both the incest and the autoeroticism show, the chapter is more related to processes of insemination, conception and birth than to the brain which is the corresponding organ of this episode in Joyce's schemes. The explicit and unrestricted rendition of the act of creation as gestation of the theological logos, points to the corresponding organ, the 'womb' of the 'Oxen of the sun' episode.

'Oxen of the sun' is set in the National Maternity hospital, in Holles street, and its manifest content relates to giving birth. The narrative is developed around the three-day labour of Mrs Purefoy. The corresponding organ is the womb.²⁸ The episode's correspondences emphasize the process of the embryonic development of language through different historical styles of English. The body now stands as a metaphor for a mental activity. Joyce suggests this is all about the delivery of a baby. However, the discussions of the noisy student group about coition, contraception, *coitus interruptus*, and abnormalities of birth represent the genesis of language itself.²⁹ As Ellmann points out, 'in fact, *coitus interruptus* becomes a verbal more than a genital matter in the episode's last pages, which are made up of a series of random ejaculations, a spray of words in all directions'.³⁰ Cheimonas's work, as we will later show, moves in line with this sort of dramatization of the bodily delivery of logos.

Stephen parallels Mrs Purefoy's delivery of a baby; he is the embryonic artist to be

²⁸ As Robert Janusko has pointed out, in drafting the episode, Joyce divided this manuscript across nine notebooks, each corresponding to one month of foetal gestation, in Philip F. Herring, *Joyce's 'Ulysses' Notesheets in the British Museum* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1972), pp. 162-5.

²⁹ In parallel to the physical phenomenon runs the metaphor of Bloom as spermatozoon, the hospital as the womb, the nurse as the ovum and Stephen as the embryo.

³⁰ 'Ulysses' on the Liffey, p. 135.

brought forth from the labours of the English language. The manic proliferation of language and styles inextricably associates this episode with that of the library, by a reversal of the bodily correspondences of brain and womb. In the library episode, where the brain sustains the aesthetics of artistic creation, the Dogma of the Trinity is debased to the incest motive and the androgynous artist to autoeroticism and/or homosexuality. The copulative character of art points to the lower strata of bodily function. 'Oxen of the Sun' deals overtly with all copulative variations and birth in its manifest content, while in its latent substratum it deals with language brought forward from the higher level of the body, or in Ellmann's words 'like Minerva from the brain'.³¹ In fact the two episodes operate as a chiasmus. The theory of 'postcreation' is complementary to Stephen's aesthetic theory but of a broader value for Joyce's act of creation:

Mark me now. In woman's womb word is made flesh but in the spirit of the maker all flesh that passes becomes the word that shall not pass away. This is the postcreation. *Omnis caro ad te veniet.*

No question but her name is puissant [...], our mighty mother and mother most venerable [...]. But here is the matter now. Or she knew him, [...] and was but creature of her creature, vergine madre, figlia di tuo figlio or she knew him not and then stands she in the one denial or ignorancy with Peter Piscator [...] *parceque M. Léo Taxil nous a dit que qui l'avait mise dans cette fichue position c'était le sacré pigeon, ventre de Dieu! Entweder transubstantiality oder consubstantiality but in no case subsubstantiality. [...] A pregnancy without joy, he said, a birth without pangs, a body without blemish, a belly without bigness. Let the lewd with faith and fervour worship. With will will we withstand, withsay. (U, 14:289-312)*

Reversal of gender roles, bodily organs and mutual transference of logic, support the clash between the theological dogma and the artistic, once more pulling it down to the lower stratum of the body. The Virgin Mary is consubstantial with the Trinity, that is, she is father, mother, son and Holy Spirit, thus marking with corporeal properties the act of artistic and theological creation. Yet as this carnival of roles is so overtly stated on the convex side

³¹ 'Ulysses' on the Liffey, p. 140.

of the narrative, its concave one is not a mere bodily process. On the contrary, in language's 'proliferent continuance' (*U*, 14:15), in the stylistic multiplication and the deluge of words, a combustible mental material is brought forward in witty outbursts, happy deliveries and ejaculations of words which will not pass away.³² By dint of its corporeal aspect, the word 'love' possesses its immortal attribute. In theology, Word becomes flesh but in Joyce's jocoserious comedy of it 'all flesh that passes becomes the word that shall not pass away'. The bodily correspondences of the schemes point in this direction: the narrative embodies organic functions, which in their jocoserious metaphoric role comprise contrast, counteraction, mutation, displacement and condensation, in a comedy of errors.

Stephen's words 'He laughed to free his mind from his mind's bondage' (*U*, 9:1016) suggest laughter's cathartic effect. Similarly the 'cloacal obsession' in 'Aeolus' (*U*, 7: 493), the proliferation of style related to giving birth in 'Oxen of the Sun', and the urination associated with the process of writing in 'Proteus' point to a literal manifestation of this catharsis in bodily terms. Joyce, through his comedy, alerts us to the bodily substratum inherent in the act of creation.

The possessive and aggressive character of Joyce's comedy has been already discussed as a clash between incompatible frames of reference. Theology, a field of high conceptualization and transcendence, is the central target of the Joycean comedy, owing to the sublimity of its ideas and to the inhibitions it imposes. Comedy is transgressive owing to its relation to the instinctual and the corporeal, as many theorists have shown, among them Bakhtin and Bataille.³³ The common denominator in all these theories is the act of subversion, the lifting of an obstacle, or a social or other inhibition. Subversion operates as an act of self-assertion on the part of the suppressed. Joyce's 'honeying malice' (*U*, 9:1088), his ironic appropriation of theology and debasement of aesthetics into bodily

³² Joyce claimed that the crime committed was against fecundity by sterilizing the act of coition. See *SL*, p. 251.

³³ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, trans. by Hélène Iswolsky (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984) and George Bataille, *Eroticism*, trans. by Mary Dolwood (London: Marion Boyars, 1982).

correspondences, is replete with sexual aggression. Therefore, the compromising and negotiating value of the comic rests upon the Joycean oscillation between opposite forces, between sympathy and incongruity, the latter cancelling the effect of the former and initiating a chain of successive reversals. At the same time self-irony and self-sarcasm contain a hint of sympathy.

Koestler's psycho-physiological approach to emotions links them both to mental operations and to the visceral and glandular substratum. This Janus-faced operation is overtly manifested in the reflexive character of laughter expressed in Herbert Spencer's 'emotion tends to beget motion'.³⁴ Spencer's theory, which was later appropriated by Freud and incorporated in his work *Jokes and their relation to the unconscious* (1905), assumes that emotional processes have a greater inertia than cognitive processes. Later research in psychophysiology has shown that the emotional substratum of the comic relates it to the sympathetic system, which involves an incomparably heavier machinery of emotion than purely mental processes. This concerns certain visceral and chemical states which tend to persist, even when unconnected with any cognitive state, as happens with the sudden disassociation of one train of thought with another in comedy. The emotion, unable to follow the sudden shift of thought, pours out in the form of laughter. W. B. Cannon's theory of emotions and Paul MacLean's more recent research concerning the triune character of the human brain, have explored this phenomenon.³⁵

Similarly, Joyce's comedy, in spite of its creator's aspiration towards 'static emotion', exploits a basic distinction between intellectuality and emotive charge.³⁶ His humour is the

³⁴ Herbert Spencer's basic assumption was that 'laughter naturally results only when consciousness is unawares transferred from great things to small - only when there is what we may call a descending incongruity', quoted from Freud, *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, p. 198. Freud also recognized that Spencer's theory could not give a satisfactory answer to the problem of laughter and its special muscular form of expression, a problem which bothered physiologists even before Darwin and was still not cleared up in Freud's time, *ibid*, p. 199.

³⁵ Cannon attributes the feelings of pain, hunger, fear and rage to the sympathetic-adrenal system. Joyce also seems to be close to such a realization when he says, 'hungry man is an angry man' (*U*, 8: 662). W. B. Cannon, *Bodily Changes in Pain, Hunger, Fear, and Rage* (New York: Dapleton, 1924), and Paul MacLean, *The Triune Brain in Evolution* (New York: Plenum, 1990).

³⁶ This distinction is not absolute. Divergent fields of science and philosophy have rejected the distinction between emotional and rational mentation. Piaget, the founder of the center for Genetic Epistemology, opposes it by insisting

outcome of both his mental and his emotional-instinctual outburst. The laughter of his narrative is not provoked by a momentary 'anaesthesia' of the heart, in Bergson's words, but in a momentary neutralization of the mind. As emotion becomes disconnected from the manic proliferation of thoughts it spills out through the gaps of the narrative. Language and the thematized body then stand for the discharged energy. In the 'Circe' episode, where human identity is reified in the theatre of instinctual upheaval, the tension is 'laughed off', to use Freud's expression, in a linguistic liquefaction. The 'kisses' spill out the tension as follows:

THE KISSES

(warbling) Leo! (twittering) Icky licky micky sticky for Leo!(cooing) Coo coocoo! Yummyyum, Womwom! (warbling) Big comebig! Pirrouette! Leopopold! (twittering) Leeolee! (warbling) O Leo!
(*U*, 15:1271-4)

In Joyce's technique of 'locomotor ataxia', conditioned by intoxication, emotion gushes out through vocalization, alliteration, word-play, punning, degradation and obscenity.³⁷ This releasing effect verifies Spencer's initial assumption later justified by contemporary physiology's discovery that 'the only purpose of the muscular activity in laughter is to get rid of surplus energy'.³⁸

The Greek authors, Pentzikis and Cheimonas, both scientists, acknowledge and sometimes thematize these processes in their art; the former in his comedy and the latter in his exploitation of the unconscious processes underlying the act of creation. In Cheimonas's work, particularly, the theme of surplus energy is dramatized in an actor's performance and maintained by his theory of aphasic language - which sustains the linguistic upheaval of his literary work.

that: 'Affectivity and intelligence are indissociable and constitute the two complementary aspects of all human behaviour' in *Six Psychological Studies*, trans. by A. Tenzer (New York: Random House, 1967), p. 15.

³⁷ Locomotor ataxia is the correspondent bodily function in Joyce's schemes.

³⁸ Koestler, *Insight and Outlook*, p. 66.

Therefore the question of scepticism in Joyce's work is predominantly linked with the mental and emotional intricacies of his comedy. We saw in the reflexive response of laughter the bodily functions involved in Joyce's comedy and their impact on the suspense of meaning. Comedy, a fundamental objective in Joyce's aesthetics and precepts of life, by its blatant corporeality and explosive mentality, opens 'the portals of discovery' (*U*, 9: 229) which lead beyond all consciousness and reason rendering the text open to multi-interpretation and equivocality. The emotions involved in Joyce's writing are discharged in the harmless reaction of laughter. This happy reaction presupposes a reader whose reasoning has gained a degree of independence from his biological drives, enabling him to realize that he has been 'jocosseriously' fooled.

2.3. The Act of Writing

One of the characteristics of modernism was the thematization of artistic creation. The bodily resources of artistic creativity were of common interest at the beginning of the twentieth century, not only among psychologists and biologists but also among authors themselves. The artist speaking about his own technique or the stress of creativity within his literary text approached the status of a motif. This relatively new mode of dealing with the issue of artistic creativity disclosed the inner processes of the act of creation, including its bodily substratum. The Greek authors mentioned in Chapter I considered Joyce a pioneer of this process for his narratorial device of stream of consciousness. Joyce's contemporaries, D. H. Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, and Thomas Mann also took a great interest in the bodily processes involved in their art.³⁹

³⁹ Referring to the act of writing D. H. Lawrence observes: 'Is there really any huge difference between my hand and my brain? Or my mind? My hand is alive, it flickers with a life of its own. It meets all the strange universe in touch, and learns a vast number of things and knows a vast number of things. My hand, as it writes these words, slips gaily along, jumps as a grasshopper to do an *i* feels the table rather cold, gets a little bored if I write too long, has its own rudiments of thought, and is just as much *me* as is my brain, my mind, or my soul. Why should I imagine that there is a *me* which is more *me* than my hand is? Since my hand is absolutely alive, *me* alive. [. . .] True, if I cut it it will

The act of writing is a recurrent theme in *U*. Stephen writes his poem in 'Proteus'; Bloom tries to write something on the sand in 'Nausicaa' and also writes a letter in the 'Sirens' episode; Mulligan writes a parody of a play at the end of 'Scylla and Charybdis', even Gerty felt 'that she too could write poetry' (*U*, 13:643); 'Oxen of the Sun' is all about writing while 'Aeolus' deals with the mechanization of the process of putting writing into print. All these acts of writing are linked with bodily functions. Stephen's writing is associated with urination, an anticipation of Shem's ink in *FW*; Bloom's writing with masturbation, at the seashore of the 'Nausicaa' episode, and fantasies of erection in the bar of the 'Sirens' episode, Mulligan's parody of a play has an autoerotic sexual overtone in its verses. The genesis of language in 'Oxen of the Sun' is related to insemination and conception, and breathing occupies the centre of 'Aeolus', with the lungs as the corresponding organ. Breathing recurs as a leitmotif of all bodily functions either as coughing or laughing or the suffocation of a drowned man in the sea ('Proteus', 'Sirens'). Molly's menstrual blood in the final chapter recapitulates the release of the tension of the body of the text in a liquefied language.

The act of writing in *U* hinges on two broad fields occupying the central vertical axes of Linati's scheme: science and art. Theology, history, philology, mythology, chemistry, rhetoric, architecture, literature, mechanics, music, medicine, painting, physics, and dance are grouped under this twofold categorization. The blending of science and art in Joyce's schemes tints his art with a scientific perspective. Art was never a one-sided matter for Joyce. His education was a sort of Odyssean wandering; he started to study medicine three times (twice in Dublin and once in Paris), law once and music once.⁴⁰ The medical interest

bleed, like a can of cherries. But then the skin that is cut, and the veins that bleed, and the bones that should never be seen, they are all just as alive as the blood that flows.' In 'Why the Novel Matters', in *Phoenix, the Posthumous Papers of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. Edward D. McDonald (London: Heinemann, 1970), pp. 533-538 (p. 533).

⁴⁰ He wrote to Nora: 'I cannot enter the social order except as a vagabond. I started to study medicine three times, law once, music once' quoted from Ellmann, *JJ*, p. 169. His brother, Stanislaus, remarks that 'he took some real interest in medicine', in *My Brother's Keeper* (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1958), p. 191.

of the young Joyce seems not to have abandoned Joyce the artist; his scientific penchant permeates his art;⁴¹ Budgen gives evidence that:

Joyce in Zurich was a curious collector of facts about the human body, especially on that borderland where mind and body meet, where thought is generated and shaped by a state of the body. Bloom is led to lunch by erotic visions [. . .].⁴²

He also liked to associate these functions with fictitious, mythical or historical material.

““Fermented drink must have had a sexual origin,” said Joyce to me one day. “In woman’s mouth, probably. I have made Bloom eat Molly’s chewed seed cake””(p. 108).

We can schematize three broad creative matrices intersecting and fusing in Joyce’s work: humour and witticism, exploratory scientific wit, and artistic innovation. The first activates and subsumes the other two. The second and the third, entwined, stand for the moment of aesthetic rapture and its detached and impersonal representation in the narrative. Science and art, the former urged by an exploratory drive, and the latter by the aesthetic rapture are conflated to sustain an encyclopaedic approach to human creativity.

⁴¹ Harriet Weaver recognized this synthetic continuum underlying Joyce’s art. She wrote to him: ‘You are very good for the soul, I think, medicinal, you are so unflattering to our human nature: so, though you are neither priest nor doctor of medicine, I think you have something of both - the Reverend James Joyce S. J., M. D’, in Ellmann, *JJ*. p. 475.

⁴² Frank Budgen, *James Joyce and the Making of ‘Ulysses’* (London: Grayson & Grayson, 1934), p. 108.

2.4. Joyce the 'Scientist'

The abnihilization of the etym by [...] the first lord of Hurtrefold explodotonates through Parsuralis with ivanmorinthorrorumble fragoromboassity amidwhiches [...] are perceivable moletons skaping with mulicules [...]. Similar scenatas are projectilised from Hullulullu, Bawlawayo, empyreal Raum and mordern Atems.

(FW, 353. 22-29)⁴³

In discussing Joyce's twofold perspective of reality, Michael Bell compares Joyce's way of viewing the characters' inner thoughts to x-ray vision.⁴⁴ This distanced and almost mechanical display of what is already there has a scientific logic rooted in his aesthetic theory of wholeness. Joyce's stylistic discoveries have the touch of a scientist about them. His basic strategy is to implant a scientific observation in a literary context. He invests his art with the objectivity of what is already there, and it is now conceived in a new synthesis, viewed from the detached spectator's perspective. Humour and witticism are his initiatives as indicated by the comic ambiance in which almost all of these moments of scientific or pseudo-scientific meditation take place; the 'Ithaca' episode of mathematical catechism is a case in point. Pentzikis and Cheimonas, in a way Joyce's descendants, are also scientists, both employing scientific discourse in their fiction.

Before Joyce's novel a text had never been conjoined with the means of scientific observation in this way.⁴⁵ The scientific inclination of *U* can be easily traced in any of its

⁴³ The passage refers to the first successful splitting of the atom by Lord Rutherford in 1919. It is a comparison of the splitting of the atom with Joyce's new approach to language, which annihilates the words and re-synthesizes their elements.

⁴⁴ M. Bell, ed., *The Context of English Literature, 1900-1930* (London: Methuen, 1980), p. 10.

⁴⁵ This scientific proclivity as such is not a new phenomenon. Its origins are rooted in the golden age of Greek civilization when beauty was related to the geometry of perspective; in Leonardo's laws of perfect proportion; in Cézanne's doctrine that all natural form can be reduced to spheres, cylinders and cones; in Bosch's vivisective aesthetics of the human body. It can be also seen in authors whose work was based on a similar approach to the

episodes. The embryonic allusions of the *Telemachiad*, the botanic and chemical diffusion in 'Lotus-eaters', the inflation-deflation respiratory processes in 'Aeolus', the minute focus on metabolic functions in the 'peristaltic prose' of 'Lestrygonians', the mimicry of conception in the artist's womb of imagination in 'Scylla and Charybdis', the mechanics in 'Wandering Rocks', the ear functions in 'Sirens', the deformities of birth in 'Oxen of the Sun', the 'locomotor ataxia' in 'Circe', the mathematical catechism in 'Ithaca', and the association of Molly's liquefied monologue with a resting and menstruating female body, are some of the most striking examples of the association of art with science. Joyce's appropriation of other fields of creativity and their enmeshment in his text constitute the unique achievement of his work. The microscopic focus on the minute details of human reality, the 'x-raying' of human thoughts along with bodily functions, bring his art to the laboratory of artistic creativity.⁴⁶ His dissections disclose an immanently scientific viewpoint which, as Ortega observes, makes the Proust-Joyce generation 'overcome realism by [...] discovering, lens in hand, the micro-structure of life'.⁴⁷

In their streams of consciousness, the protagonists of *U* develop their thoughts through a ceaseless interrogation of the world surrounding them. Stephen's intellectual meditations dissect philosophical-aesthetic thought from Aristotle to Berkeley and Kant. Bloom's thoughts concern the habitual mind of his epoch, while Molly's inconsistent argument shows the naivety of the average bored housewife. Stephen's meditation on the natural phenomena of creation and on the changes of the cells in the human body, Bloom's naturalistic approach to sublimated human rites in the Eucharist or his thoughts on music, all harbour a scientific or pseudo-scientific spirit. When they meditate on artistic creativity, the scientific detail conjoins with broader universal contexts, mythical, religious-

human body, such as Rabelais who derives comedy from the exaggerated functions of the gigantic body of Gargantua, or Swift.

⁴⁶ Appropriately, the American physicist Murray Gell-Mann, in 1963, coined the term 'quark' for the ultimate elementary particles of matter, taken from *Finnegans Wake* as Webster's Dictionary cites.

⁴⁷ José Ortega y Gasset, *The Dehumanization of Art*, p. 33, quoted from Dorrit Cohn, *Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), p. 9.

philosophical, and moral, among which the Dogma of the Trinity and the idea of metempsychosis are central. Thus the turning point of Stephen's meditation on the phenomenon of creation occurs when he associates the Aristotelian entelechy - the vital principle which turns mere substance into living organism and at the same time strives towards perfection - with the theological concept of creation. The same applies to the serious moments of the jocose narrative which harbour secret tragic emotion: Stephen's recalling of his mother's death, Bloom's of his dead son, along with the tremors of creativity taking place in the 'Proteus' episode.

The scientific or pseudo-scientific meditation and the aesthetic rapture manifest themselves in the highest turn of the hierarchical spiral, where language and reasoning are produced, and in the lowest stratum where the act of writing is associated with bodily functions. The bodily substratum of the act of writing is successively engaged with archetypal patterns of symbolism, mythic or religious. The act of writing, as thematized in Joyce's art, is an all-encompassing phenomenon. Its greatest momentum is manifested in Joyce's own language, the most celebrated domain of his work.

The scientific implication of Joyce's schemes permeates the linguistic texture of *U*. The characters' basic thoughts progress in a constant unfolding and refolding of established ideas which randomly invade their minds as they meet with the world. The hero's mind in progress provides master metaphors for *U*. In 'Calypso', Mrs Bloom ludicrously raises the question of metempsychosis. Molly asks Bloom what that word in the book means: 'met-him-pike-hoses'.

-Met him what? He asked.

-Here, she said. What does that mean?

-He leaned downward and read near her polished thumbnail.

-Metempsychosis?

-Yes. Who's he when he's at home?

-Metempsychosis, he said, frowning. It's Greek: from the Greek. That means the transmigration of souls.

-O, rocks! She said. Tell us in plain words. (*U*, 4: 336-443)

In 'Lestrygonians', Bloom, in his usual mode of regurgitating words, comes to a reworking synthesis of this conversation. Associating metempsychosis with the word 'parallax' ('I never exactly understood it' (8:111)), his simplistic train of thought unfolds as follows: 'Met him pike hoses she called it till I told her about the transmigration. O! Rocks! [...] She is right after all. Only big words for ordinary things on account of the sound' (*U*, 8: 113-5).

Bloom's conclusion is based on Molly's initial naive disintegration of the word 'metempsychosis'. The ridiculous and comic aspects of this question bring about the collision between two incompatible frames of reference, as discussed in our previous section on comedy. Molly's question about the meaning of the word states a paradox concerning the sound of the separated lexical units of the word. Bloom's reworking of the same problem is directed towards its solution. The prevailing point of his logic is the recognition that language is constructed on different levels on account of the sound. Molly's ludicrous question poses a problem never realized before by Bloom or the reader. It brings forward a novelty stemming from her difficulty in understanding the sophisticated verbal construction of the word and its meaning. Her difficulty in understanding, which is also Bloom's on another level, instigates the progress of thought. By introducing a new way of reading the word, her question, unwittingly, blocks the habitual way of thinking, and reinforces Bloom's re-creative meditation on the nature of language. The originality of her question is rooted in her ignorance. The originality of his solution derives from his half-knowledge. Entirely unwittingly, both arrive at the same conclusion concerning the relation of the sound and language; a reality which was always there but never before articulated in this particular way, their way which is also Joyce's.

The same process operates in scientific research in which what had always been there is brought together in a new articulation. There is a regressive and analytic undoing of the word in Molly's naivety, and a progressive synthetic redoing of the same word pattern in Bloom's innocent thoughts. He moves the word away from the conundrum posed by the sound and pushes it one level upwards to the word 'metempsychosis' based on meaning and signification. A similar process operates in 'Lotus-eaters' when Bloom meditates on the Eucharist:

The priest bent down to put it into her mouth, murmuring all the time. What? *Corpus*: body. Corpse. Good idea the Latin. Stupefies them first. Hospice for dying. They don't seem to chew it: only swallow it down. Rum idea: eating bits of a corpse. Why cannibals cotton to it. (*U*, 5:348-52)

Here, an analytic unfolding of the meaning of the word on account of sound occurs. The alliterative properties of the word trace their origins back to the roots in Latin. Both obsolete and decayed aspects of the language and the body are imbued with profanity, which in Bloom's case is not received as blasphemy. The humorous tone of Bloom's meditation is robbed of its malice and he has the objectivity of a naive spectator. The dead corpse of Christ is associated with Dignam's dead body and Bloom's ad of 'Plumtree's potted meat' (*U*, 144:8) maintaining the humorous ambiance of the text, and simultaneously enacting a chain of interlaced sequences of thought leading to multi-signification. As Ellmann says, 'in *U* a short circuit has long implications'.⁴⁸

The foregoing examples have as a common denominator a strong and demanding question: Bloom's 'What?' has a tone of pseudo-philosophical *aporia*. Both instances develop, with an analytic undoing of language, sound and habitual concepts which, once disintegrated, get incorporated into a synthetic viewpoint with far-reaching implications. Bloom's bloomisms are the inventions of this exploratory logic, the outlets of an 'epiphanic' discovery. Its basic function is a regressive gesture to the already known, and a

⁴⁸ Ellmann, 'Ulysses' on the Liffey, p. 62.

progressive synthesis of the hitherto unconnected. Joyce wrote the entire 'Nausicaa' chapter with this technique, defined in his schemes as 'retrogressive progression' and constituting the cornerstone of his scientific logic as well as of his language play. This process more than anything else points to the fact that there is no creation *ex nihilo*, as Stephen reflects in 'Proteus'. It is constantly operating within *U* and is manifested above all in the act of writing.

As previously argued, the book's structure enacts the pluralistic view of a holarchic hierarchy according to which each single chapter is interrelated with the other within the book's general project. 'Aeolus' typifies this process. Set in the office of the *Freeman's Journal and National Press*, the episode stages the act of writing in the most alienated way. The mechanized reproduction of language by the printing press pushes the narrative beyond the usual narratorial forms. A text interspersed with boldfaced titles, thematizing trivialities, imitating and mocking the form of a newspaper, stitches together micro-narratives that simultaneously perpetuate the continuity of its story.⁴⁹ As 'the book begins to advertise its own artifice', the text highlights the process of writing rather than the story upholding its formation.⁵⁰ As Ellmann observes, 'He (Joyce) conceived of his entire book as a silent unspoken portrayal of an archetypal man who would never appear and yet whose body would slowly materialize as the book progressed, linguafied as it were into life'.⁵¹ This bodily materialization underpins the technique of this chapter.

The chain of associations highlights the relations between the respiratory system and oral discourse as well as its transformation, in the machines of the press, into written language. The technique of 'rhetoric' is related to the lungs and to the symbol 'machines: wind' as well as 'mutability'. However, the transformation does not take place with a sudden leap from the organ 'lung' to journalism and to the machines of the press. The

⁴⁹ A similar technique is followed in Cheimonas's *I Ekdromi*.

⁵⁰ Karen Lawrence, *The Odyssey of Style in 'Ulysses'* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 58.

⁵¹ Ellmann, 'Ulysses' on the Liffey, p. 73.

respiratory rhythm of the machines 'sllt. . . sllt. . . sllt' has in its mechanization a hidden analogy with the rhythm of a living body, pulsation being the characteristic of all living organisms. 'Sllt. Almost human the way it sllt to call attention. Doing its level best to speak. That door too sllt creaking, asking to be shut. Everything speaks in its own way. Sllt' (*U*, 7:175-7). In speaking in its own way everything depends on a certain level of the hierarchy. Its foundation is the material bodily world which transforms the infinitesimal corpuscles into air-waves permeating the spiral of the stratified hierarchy. The corpuscles become waves, become blood (Stephen's blood is 'wooded by grace of language'), circulate, carry messages though the neural system to the cortex, become unverbilized images and ideas and convert again through a similar process to mechanical action which stimulates the vocal chords in order for the sound to be produced. In this utterance sound becomes phonemes, morphemes, words, sentences, grammar, syntax, discourse, and rhetoric. As oral discourse or verbal images printed on paper these elements, consubstantial in their essence, though differentiated according to the level to which they belong, make their way backward into the body. The sound passes through the ear and the visual image through the retina. Similarly, in the mechanical level of the press machines, the airwaves vibrate with the printing process which merges the ink with the paper.

Entangled with the mythical personage of Aeolus, the wind-keeper, this process controls the intakes and the outputs of air in fragmentary textual releases. On another level, more distant from the bodily stratum, the same pattern is developed as the newspaper is compared to rhetoric. The rhetorical tropes become points of departure for this modern medium of communication. However, via a process of dissection and parody their style mingles with modernity, reproducing once more the process of undoing and redoing. As Karen Lawrence puts it, 'Joyce's characteristic gesture is not to obliterate but to incorporate' (*ibid*, p. 58). This process reflects the functions of the living body. Verbal and acoustic games, decked in

rhetorical mode, abound in the text's microcosmic intakes and outlets of air. Inflation and deflation are represented in the rhetorical devices of chiasmus: 'Grossbooted draymen rolled barrels dullthudding out of Prince's stores and bumped them up on the brewery float. On the brewery float bumped dullthudding barrels rolled by grossbooted draymen out of Prince's stores' (*U*, 7:21-24). It is also seen in the palindrome of reversed sentences: 'Madam, I'm Adam. And Able was I ere I saw Elba' (7:682), in the *homoiooteleuton* of 'mouth south: tomb womb', and in the complementarity of paired phrases and words such as 'scissors and paste', 'Way in. Way out', 'thumping thumping', 'clank it clank it', 'EXIT BLOOM' – 'RETURN OF BLOOM'. In the 'brewery float' of style and language, the dispersed signs of bodily functions sustain the circulatory inflation-deflation of the text. Joyce smashes language into its elements, just as the 'Machines. Smash a man to atoms if they got him caught. [...] Fermenting' (*U*, 7:81-2). Fermentation which applies to the 'brewery float', recurs as outgoing 'screech of laughter' (119), as intaken air, circulation of air, 'flatulence', heartburn, and catching cold in the park. There is an analogy of the respiratory process and the human metabolism implied in the chapter.

Joyce's artistic temperament exploited scientific information to build the jocose and serious moments of his art. Thus fermentation, which in 'Aeolus' alludes to the brewing drink, also implies a broader relation to the blood's circulatory functions.⁵² Metabolism is viewed as a naturally justified phenomenon.⁵³ On another level, the after-effects of this exploitation present themselves in illnesses or psychosomatic disturbances related to respiration and blood circulation. Ellmann, in his ironic, metaphor for the 'muse of the fourth estate' inspiring the headings of 'Aeolus', notices that this muse 'becomes slowly infected with a lung disease'.⁵⁴ The disturbances humorously parade through the chapter in

⁵² Fermentation is a chemical process brought about by ferment - an enzyme that catalyzes the anaerobic breakdown of molecules that yield energy.

⁵³ 'Sounds a bit silly till you come to look into it well. Justice it means but it's everybody eating everyone else. That's what life is after all' (*U*, 7: 212-3).

⁵⁴ Ellmann, '*Ulysses*' on the *Liffey*, p. 73.

a background arrangement: Flatulence (*U*, 7:96), paralysis (*U*, 7:102), jaundice (*U*, 7:135), spasm (*U*, 7:268), hectic flush (implied tuberculosis *U*, 7:293), foot and mouth disease (*U*, 7:619), Stephen's wooing blood and flushes (excitation, *U*, 7:776), a dumb belch of hunger (*U*, 7:860), lumbago (*U*, 7:949), and vertigo (*U*, 7:1012).⁵⁵ Air and blood become the fundamental elements for the daily function of the organs of the body. As we shall see in the scene of bodily writing, they are the consubstantial properties which, in the highest turn of the spiral, present themselves as the impregnating Holy Spirit, the herald of Logos, and the cathartic sacrificial blood. At lower levels they regulate the emotive dynamics of the act of writing and the detours of its regressive properties concerning repressed desire and sexuality. In the world of the work of art they become metaphors determining the process of the narrative, as suggested by the Homeric motif of the questing voyager on the winedark sea of blood; or D. H. Lawrence's ether, to mention one of Joyce's contemporaries; or Derrida's 'voice' (*phōnē*) as breath, in the act of writing, to mention one of our contemporary philosophers who acknowledges Joyce's influence on his thought.⁵⁶

Joyce developed this chapter by disintegrating and reintegrating the constituents of the process of writing. Regressing and progressing into the stylistic devices through time, he shows that the act of writing is an all-encompassing phenomenon. In its sublimated form it is presented as a deliberative and detached style which can be as empty of meaning and signification as the headlines of the chapter indicate. Simultaneously it can be as replete with implications as the vagaries of his artistic and scientific taste require.

This twofold process has its parallel in lapses into the self's early stages of conscious, preconscious or unconscious operations and their incorporation in the ego's equilibrium of emotions. The excessive symptoms of these lapses are thoroughly discussed in Freudian

⁵⁵ A long list of diseases and psychosomatic symptoms in *U* is provided by J. B. Lyons, *James Joyce & Medicine* (Dublin: Dolmen Press, 1973), pp. 70-83. Also Stanislaus Joyce asked his brother, 'Isn't your art in danger of becoming a sanitary science [...] Everything dirty seems to have the same irresistible attraction for you that cowdung has for flies.' Quoted Lyons, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

⁵⁶ Derrida, 'Speech and Phenomena', in *A Derrida Reader: Between the Blinds*, ed. by Peggy Kamuf (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), pp. 8-30 (p. 19).

case-histories of hysteria. In Joyce's work, the inordinate results of this twofold process are manifest in the conjoining of the bodily phenomena of the lower stratum with the cognitive patterns of the higher turn of the spiral. 'Aeolus' is a case in point, and has its Greek parallel in Cheimonas. The process of regression to the lower bodily functions furnishes language and narrative with the biological rhythm of a live body. Joyce's ability to ingest and recreate the most divergent material, pertains in more ways than one to his act of writing. Thus we are going to limit our argument to its bodily substratum as it is displayed in the scene of writing in the 'Proteus' episode in the light of Joyce's master metaphor of the doctrine of the Trinity and the associated, recurrent metaphors, of sea and blood.

2.5. Epiphanies by the Sea

The early Joyce of *Stephen Hero* fabricates his aesthetics around the concept of epiphany. As presented there, epiphany bears on preconscious and conscious operations of the mind. Scattered thoughts, fragments of colloquy, 'dancing the dance of unrest in his brain', shape the aesthetic object as 'one integral thing' (*SH*, 218). Stanislaus Joyce describes it as follows:

Another experimental form which his literary urge took [...] consisted in the noting of what he called 'epiphanies'- manifestations or revelations. Jim always had a contempt for secrecy, and these notes were in the beginning ironical observations of slips, and little errors and gestures - mere straws in the wind - by which people betrayed the very things they were most careful to conceal. [...] The revelation and importance of the subconscious had caught his interest.⁵⁷

As James Maddox observes, 'epiphany is a miracle [...] occurring in a secular, here-and-now world'.⁵⁸ In *U* moments of epiphany are partly manifested in Bloom's pseudo-

⁵⁷ Stanislaus Joyce, *My Brother's Keeper*, pp. 134-5.

⁵⁸ James H. Maddox, Jr, *Joyce's 'U' and the Assault upon Character* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1978),

scientific and naive discoveries, in a state of equanimity; in Stephen's aesthetic quest for an identity and also, one could say, in Molly's 'epiphanized' dissolution of language. However, the clearest epiphanic moment of the book is displayed in the 'Proteus' episode poised between objectivity and subjectivity.

In *P*, a story of the emancipation and initiation of the young artist, the epiphanies still keep the tremors of the aesthetic rapture in open view. The mystical ecstasies of the young artist do not yet suggest the distant eye of the invisible creator. The free indirect speech of *P* sustains in its descriptive mode a first-person immediacy of emotion. However, the protean Stephen, in *U*, unfolds his innermost self in a confessional way, namely the conceptualized representation of his feelings on a 'conscious' level. The degree of conscious interpretation of his relation to the world dramatically diversifies as he gradually moves from the objective outer material to a more subjective interior world. Stephen's quest at the seashore results in the writing of his vampire poem in a moment of epiphany.⁵⁹ This moment, the only artistically creative moment of Stephen's in the book, from our point of view, is a moment of creation, of growth and not of 'corruption' as Ellmann claims.⁶⁰

The act of writing is Stephen's self-asserting attitude before a world in a process of disintegration. Gathering together bits and pieces of historical, philosophic-theological and psychological frustration in his meditation, Stephen's response to his life's impasses is an act of creation. The writing process is presented as an outlet for the psychological despondency of the young artist. Its representation brings together the death-rebirth motif and its physical substratum pertaining to the body.⁶¹ The bodily sources and after-effects of

p. 7.

⁵⁹ Stephen's act of creation in 'Proteus' has been assimilated by Pentzikis in his *Kyria Ersi* and associated with the miraculous moments of artistic creativity which, like Joyce's epiphanies, function as miracles occurring in the secular world. The same concept is maintained by Cheimonas in his anti-theological project, which we believe he has partly appropriated from Joyce: 'the part, as section and epiphany (φανερώση) of the whole, the whole as receptacle of the part, exists by dint of the part, it is whole exclusively due its relation to the part', in *I Dysthymi Anagennisi, Ogdoo Mathema gia ton Logo* (Athens: Ipsilon, 1987), p. 64.

⁶⁰ In fact, Ellmann's approach lends a Freudian touch to this process of creativity. His analysis of 'Proteus' implicitly bears on Freud's false and semi-revised notion of the death instinct. See '*Ulysses*' on the Liffey (p. 24).

⁶¹ The same motif reappears in the Greek authors: In Xefloudas through the myth of eternal return through the artist's submersion into his original matrix of creation, coded feminine; in Pentzikis as death and resurrection sustaining his

the young artist's writing shake up the emotional equilibrium of detachment. The poem is a conduit for all the emotional and linguistic upheaval, transubstantiated into words and rhythm. As the poem appears in the 'Aeolus' episode (three chapters later), Joyce's focus is not on the poem itself but on the individuating rhythm of the artistic subject.

Fabricated from a bifocal view which brings together the ever-changing seascape and Stephen's inner one, the episode unfolds by the sea at Sandymount strand. The narrative is conditioned by a liquid element, tide being the basic symbol in Gilbert's scheme. In Linati's scheme, this symbolic analogy is transcribed in 'word, tide, moon, evolution, metamorphosis'. Stephen's contemplation is centered around the natural order of the world with a special focus on generation.

We can schematize Stephen's stream of consciousness as conflating three intersecting frames of reference: the physicality of the outside world; its relation to the intellect's perception; and the individual's identity. As the narrative develops with a ceaseless fusion of the objective and the subjective, the boundaries of the self and the world are blurred. The random mutations of Stephen's contemplation, although activated by the external world, are reiterated by his own thoughts. The thematic patterns switch from philosophy to theology and from there to the individual's psycho-history of a 'family romance'. The birth-death motif upholds the protean changes of the narrative. The employment of the archetype of Proteus, the sea-god of ceaseless permutation and metamorphosis, launches the twofold perspective of the birth-death motif. The birth-death motif associates the Christian concept of 'transubstantiation' with the pagan notion of metempsychosis.⁶²

act of creation; and in Cheimonas as the murderous erotic union which exterminates the other, always of the opposite sex, in order for new-born logos to come to life.

⁶² Gilbert discusses the Homeric and Egyptian origins of this God (p. 113) as well as his relation to the primal matter as encountered in esoteric writings. An evolutionary concept surfaces out of these theosophical conceptions which supports the regenerative processes of the 'Proteus' episode. See Gilbert, *James Joyce's 'U'* (London: Faber and Faber, 1952), p. 115.

Juggling with philosophical and physical ideas, the self-ironic Stephen never manages to make his way out of the farrago of his Daedalian mind before the writing of his poem.⁶³ In less than one page, Stephen's questing voyage - for this is also a secondary motif at the microscopic level of the chapter - takes him to Aristotle, Boehme, Hamlet, Blake and Berkeley.⁶⁴ The wave-like tides of his language drift into Greek, Italian, French, English, Scandinavian and German. His fluidity of thought substantiates and momentarily crystallizes as he touches upon his personal psycho-history, only to dissolve again in mythical and Christian archetypes - Adam Kadmon (*U*, 3:41), the Doctrine of the Trinity, and Mananaan. Or, as Michael Bell puts it, 'Joyce increasingly dissolves individual personality first into mythic archetypes and eventually, we might say, into the "mind" of language at large'.⁶⁵

The mythical archetypes which swarm around the central concepts of reincarnation and transubstantiation are superimposed on a sort of vitalism reflected in the liquid element of the narrative, mostly pertaining to the birth-death-rebirth motif.⁶⁶ From this perspective, Joyce's handling of mythical superstructure is close to Jung's archetypes. Jung, in his study of religion, has showed that rebirth into a new way of life has been recognized and organized by religions throughout history.⁶⁷ The degenerating-regenerating process, whose basic functions can be found in nature, in the phenomena of re-adaptation and readjustment of species must have been intuitively recognizable in early societies and hence linked with mythic and religious superstitions.⁶⁸ Baptism and the initiation rites of primitive societies

⁶³ This is another effect of Joyce's desire to strip artistic creation of its gloss and to bring it down to earth. Commenting to Budgen on his treatment of Stephen, Joyce said: 'I haven't let this young man off very lightly, have I? Many writers have written about themselves. I wonder if any one of them has been so candid as I have?' (*The Making of 'U'*, p. 52).

⁶⁴ All three Greek authors discussed in this study have assimilated this sort of wandering in literary tradition, reworking it through a revisiting of Homer's text.

⁶⁵ M. Bell, 'Introduction: modern movements in literature', in *The Context of English Literature*, p. 10.

⁶⁶ On Stephen's 'vital force', see *P*, p. 187.

⁶⁷ Jung, *Psychological Types*, in *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, 17 vols, ed. by Sir Herbert Read, Michael Fordham, M. D., M. R. C. P. Gerard Adler (London: Routledge & Kegan, 1956), VI, p. 316. c.f. *Contributions to Analytical Psychology*, p. 395.

⁶⁸ As Dowben relates, 'the earliest Greek philosophers believed that all life originated from sea slime by the action of heat, sun, and air. The Greeks, of course, believed that the entire universe was a living entity and that living matter could be neither created nor destroyed. [. . .] For Anaxagoras (510-428 B. C.) tiny seeds, *spermata*, were brought

are two characteristic examples, related to liquid - the former to water and the latter to blood.⁶⁹ As Jung argues, the death-rebirth motif recurs in numerous myths in the form of a sea-sun association:

The sun sails over the sea like an immortal god who every evening is immersed in the maternal waters and is born anew in the morning. [...] If, then, we find the blood-red sunrise connected with the idea that a birth is taking place, the birth of the young sun, the question immediately arises: Whose is the paternity? How did the woman become pregnant? [...] The resulting myth is that since the sea - woman devoured the sun and now brings a new sun into the world, she obviously became pregnant in that way. [...] All these sea-going gods are solar figures. They are enclosed in a chest or an ark for the 'night sea journey' (Frobenius), often in the company of a woman (pl. xxiib)[...]. During the night sea journey the sun god is shut up in the mother's womb, and often threatened by all kind of dangers.⁷⁰

Jung's analysis of the regenerating properties of the sea is not a unique discovery. This sort of approach can also be found in Freud, Ferenczi, and most of all, in archetypal patterns in poetry, among which the Homeric prototype holds the most celebrated position often being the source of similar poetic metaphors combining the sea motif with that of the questing voyager.⁷¹ All three Greek authors discussed in this research develop their work around this pattern, Xefloudas being the most conspicuous case in point.

down from the air by rainwater to fructify the earth. For Aristotle, actively living things possessed a soul, an *entelechy*. [...] By and large, however, the Greeks believed in spontaneous generation, and Aristotle maintained that many animals as well as plants could be observed to originate from the earth, particularly in association with decaying material. In the course of translating and recopying classical manuscripts during the Middle Ages, fabulous embellishments were added to the writings of Aristotle and others.' Robert M. Dowben, *General Physiology* (London: Harper & Row, 1969), p. 14. Thus we can have an idea of Stephen's Aristotelian contemplation of nature, regenerated from 'decaying material' although this is not the only insinuation of the text. Moreover, we can see that Stephen's as well as Joyce's concern is not the decaying material in itself, but the regeneration of life and the escape of death in general, from which the esoteric and religious doctrines derive.

⁶⁹ Bruno Bettelheim shows that the male initiation in society is associated with basic female functions such as menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding which are represented in relevant male rites: circumcision, subincision and imitation of pregnancy. The basic point of his research, emerging from the fantasies of male adolescents, in analytic treatment, is that the male initiation is designed to alleviate male anxiety about female sexual powers; we may add that these feminine powers, as myths of death and rebirth show, have always been related to nature at large, coded feminine. Thus, the sea element, attributed to the mother in Joyce's narrative, has in its regenerative properties the value of blood, as the Homeric wine-dark sea also indicates. See Bruno Bettelheim, *Symbolic Wounds* (Glencoe: Free Press, 1954), pp. 221-22.

⁷⁰ C. G. Jung, *Symbols of Transformation* in *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, 17 vols, ed. by Sir Herbert Read, Michael Fordham, M. D., M. R. C. P. Gerard Adler (London: Routledge & Kegan, 1956) V, pp. 209-10.

⁷¹ Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, Wordsworth's *The Prelude* and Swinburne's *The Triumph of Time*, are all examples of this kind; not to mention Virgil, Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, echoes of whom can be easily traced in Joyce's work. For an extensive Jungian analysis of this issue, see Maud Bodkin's *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry* (London: Oxford University Press, 1934) p. 26-88. See also Sándor Ferenczi, *Thalassa: A Theory of Genitality*, trans. by Henry Alden Bunker (New York: W. W. Norton, 1968).

In *U*, the sea motif, owing both to its Homeric derivations and the Dublin location of its story, has a dominant role. In Joyce's allusions, the sea is both Mulligan's 'great sweet Mother' (*U*, 1:80), after Swinburne, and the 'snotgreen sea' echoing Stephen's dead mother's vomiting 'the green sluggish bile which she had torn up from her rotting liver' (*U*, 1:109). In fact, for Stephen, in contrast to Mulligan and to Bloom, the sea is a fearful and detested substance. In Mulligan's scientific physicality, the sea is viewed from a distant and unemotional point. In Stephen's aesthetic temperament, however, its physical properties and poetic correspondences to blood, vomit, urine, wine, and water become a source of *abjection*.⁷² This is especially the case because on another level of his mind he associates the sea with his dead mother's ghost which haunts him through the book's day. And yet, Stephen, through his '*physiques, chimiques et naturelles*' (*U*, 3:176), is quite aware of the transformative dynamics of this primal matter into everything. His train of thought, soon after his finding poetic and bodily relief, harbours an evolutionary perspective. Recapitulating the whole permutational process of the chapter, he concludes: 'God becomes man becomes fish becomes barnacle goose becomes featherbed mountain. Dead breaths I living breathe, tread dead dust, devour a urinous offal from all dead' (*U*, 3:479-80).⁷³ Soon after, he also switches the sea's gender from mother to 'Old Father Ocean' (*U*, 3:483), to suggest its androgynous properties in contrast to Mulligan's female view of the sea.

Stephen associates the archetype of the regenerative sea with the biological concept of evolution. An early assumption that the first form of life originated in the sea underlies all the archetypal patterns of death-rebirth. Owing more to Joyce's than to Stephen's technique of undoing-redoing, Stephen's wandering at the seashore accomplishes an evolutionary step of self-repair, a way out of his personal crisis, marked by the act of artistic writing. Stephen's act of writing is Joyce's unwittingly 'evolutionary' reaction as an artist, mostly

⁷² Abjection is the detestation that one experiences in a regression, in recalling the maternal. It relates to the clean and proper body. See Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, trans. by L. S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982).

⁷³ Compare these associations with the early philosophical assumptions of the origins of life in Dowben's *General*

manifested through his staging of the writing process rather than in its outcome. The poem itself merely condenses the degenerative-regenerative process. The epiphanic moment of this artistic creation, in its psychosomatic manifestations, enacts a personal psycho-history, a family romance, and a literal cathartic release performed by the urinating Stephen at the very moment of his writing of the poem.

Stephen enters the scene in a Hamletian psychological crisis. Homeless, keyless, historically and psychologically haunted, Stephen unweaves all the threads of his present dislocation, as a dispossessed son, an embryonic artist, and a frustrated young man. His undoing of all patterns of thought is viewed through this filter of distress which aims at survival, a way out of his intellectual and emotional *cul de sac*. The mutating scenery interchanges birth with death accompanied by the acoustic effects of the cracking waste material, the wave-like wind, romping round him bird-like (*U*, 3:55), sweet-like (*U*, 3:104) and sea-like ('harping in wild nerves, wind of wild air of seeds of brightness' (*U*, 3:266-7). As these transformations of matter from air to water and from water to blood follow Stephen's steps, his sensual perception also mutates from seeing to hearing to smelling; it culminates in the 'Touch me. Soft eyes. Soft soft soft hand. [...] What is the word known to all men? I am quiet here alone. Sad too. Touch, touch me' (*U*, 3:435-7). The shift from the solid external reality to his emotional inner landscape incites the act of writing. And yet, this sensory and emotional shift becomes obvious to the reader only after a long voyage into Stephen's world of ideas, out of which his emotional outlet is derived as an artistic rebirth.

Stephen's ingestion of the outer world starts with the reading of 'signatures of all things' (*U*, 3:2). With a sensual (visual and acoustic) play of introjection into the self and a projection onto the outside world, the opening of the chapter attempts a spatio-temporal orientation of the subject, 'walking into eternity along Sandymount strand' (*U*, 3:18). Stephen's eternity signals a transcendental process of re-uniting the self with the world.

‘Rhythm’ (*U*, 3:23), which plays an essential role in this self-adjustment, has both a biological and an artistic overtone, namely the wave-like rhythm of the sea and the ‘catalectic tetrameter of iambs’ (*U*, 3:24). However, as the verses spring from the cracking alliteration of the shells, the sea’s jettison, ‘wild sea money’, a creation out of nature’s waste is taking place at a microcosmic level. In one paragraph, the whole theme of the chapter has been suggested: ‘Creation from nothing’ (*U*, 3:35): where nothing is the waste matter of nature. Regression and progression, undoing and redoing are not separated. They occur almost simultaneously as if out of a principle of complementarity, emulating and activating each other till the moment of catharsis.

The *Frauenzimmer*’s bag, hiding ‘a misbirth with a trailing navelcord’ (*U*, 3:36) ‘coming down to our mighty mother’ anticipates, *mutatis mutandis*, Stephen’s poem and offal (*U*, 3:456-60). Stephen’s assumption that the two midwives are carrying a dead embryo to the sea precipitates a recreative and regenerative process indicated by the umbilical telephone cables which are to put him ‘on to Edenville’ (*U*, 3:40). The navel brings the birth-death motif under the umbrella of regeneration.⁷⁴ Stephen lightens his despondency by envisioning all navel cords extending from Eve. He parallels this image to the mystic monks whose sashes link them together in the present, and trace a path back to God. The *omphalos* motif, also found in Pentzikis as *omphaloscope* (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 314), has a twofold perspective. It intersects the birth-death motif with the state of repose of the mystical doctrines, Jung’s ‘night journey’, or Freud’s Nirvana principle, a psychological state of withdrawal and reinforcement for a new start - a rebirth.

Joyce contrasts birth to death by an antithetical presentation of Eve’s unblemished belly, an allusion to the Immaculate Conception of Mary, the second Eve, and Stephen’s view of a bloated carcass of a dog, which is also associated with the vision of the leprous corpse surfacing from the sea. This latter imagery is also, as we shall see, Stephen’s projection of

⁷⁴ On the birth-death motif and regeneration see ‘the Omphalos’ chapter, in Gilbert, *James Joyce’s ‘U’*, pp. 60-65.

himself, representing his despondent psychological state and the rebirth motif. The seawater stands as a source for both birth and death. However, the narrative seems to highlight the degenerative proclivities of nature rather than its recreative potentials. Likewise, Stephen's thoughts derive more from his 'houses of decay' (*U*, 3:105) than from an optimistic envisioning of his future. Both the physical observation and the psychological dislocation have an inherent analogy with the biological process of creation and the origins of life as indicated by biology. They hark back to the evolutionary phenomenon of 'paedomorphosis', according to which, 'at certain critical stages, evolution can *retrace its steps*, as it were, along the path which led to the dead end and make a fresh start in a new, more promising direction': nature's escape from stagnation or evolutionary standstill.⁷⁵

Biological research has justified two ideas implicit in Joyce's Protean imagination. One is that there is now fairly good evidence confirming the early mythological and philosophical assumption that life originated in the sea.⁷⁶ In 1928, Garstang proved that chordates and vertebrates (therefore human beings as well), are descended from the larval stage of some primitive echinoderm, perhaps rather like the sea-urchin or sea-cucumber.⁷⁷ The other is that this evolutionary breakthrough came not from an adult stage of evolution but from an embryonic one, as the larval state of the sea-cucumber is the source of the creation of the new species.⁷⁸ This 'juvenilisation' involves retreat from the specialized adult forms to

⁷⁵ As Koestler argues, in biology's account, the cause of extinction and stagnation is over-specialization with its concomitant loss of adaptability to changes in the environment (*Janus*, p. 216). We assume that Stephen, owing to his 'Naturelles', was quite aware of this phenomenon. In human beings, the phenomenon does not appear in the form of biological evolution or stagnation. It is reflected in patterns of behaviour. Over-specialization takes the form of pedantry or the slavery of habits, which for example Bergson recognizes in the mechanization of human behaviour.

⁷⁶ Hardy (1965), Gavin De Beer (1940), Koltsov (1936), Takhatan (1972) and J. Z. Young (1950), are quoted by Koestler, *The Ghost in the Machine* (London: Hutchinson, 1967) pp. 163-166.

⁷⁷ 'Now an adult sea cucumber' says Koestler, 'would not be a very inspiring ancestor - it is a sluggish creature which looks like an ill stuffed sausage with leatherly skin, lying on the sea bottom. But its free floating larva is a much more promising proposition: unlike the adult sea cucumber, the larva has bilateral symmetry like a fish; it has a ciliary band - a forerunner of the nervous system - and some other sophisticated features not found in the adult animal' (*The Ghost in the Machine*, p. 163-4). Compare that to Pentzikis's Mr Posnatonpoum who '[...] is a species of [...] echinoderm'. Or elsewhere, 'We said that Mr Posnatonpoum is a sort of a sea-cucumber'. Mr Posnatonpoum [Mr Whatshisname or in Joyce's words 'Howdoyoucallem' (*FW* 94.34)] is a paternal figure, the natural origin of life in *Semeioseis Ekaton Imeron*, an appropriation of the name HCE the father and everyman of Joyce's *FW*. In Pentzikis, *Semeioseis Ekaton Imeron* (Salonica: Paratiritis, 1988), pp. 31, 39.

⁷⁸ 'Since Bulk's pioneering work, published in 1926, it is now generally accepted that the human adult resembles the embryo of an ape rather than an adult ape.' (*Janus*, p. 218). Also on paedomorphosis see J. Z. Young in *The Life of Vertebrates* (Oxford: 1950), p. 74.

earlier, less committed and more plastic stages in the development of organisms.⁷⁹ Koestler describes this pattern as a *reculer pour mieux sauter*, which occurs at critical turning points in evolution. We also saw some of its manifestations in discussing the cognitive patterns of scientific thought in *U*, via the process of undoing and redoing, which breaks through the rigid logic of established language by regressing into preverbal images (met him pike hoses) or mere vocalizations (the 'slt', of the Aeolus machines).

In mental evolution, as Koestler points out, regeneration occurs by a temporary regression to more primitive and uninhibited modes of ideation, followed by a creative forward leap. Man, being top of the evolutionary ladder, has reduced his physical regenerative ability. This has been compensated for by his mental and psychological ability to break through habitual patterns of stagnant behaviour or to subvert established codes. The phenomenon of regeneration pertains to this capacity to respond creatively to the impasses of his life, as already suggested in the birth-death-rebirth motif and discussed in its archetypal form in Jung's mythic archetypes. Jung's 'night journey', a descent into obscurity or into a state of repose, is the favourite motif of epic and lyrical poetry as well as of religious and mythic literature. Stephen's 'night journey' starts with his isolation from the social environment and his submersion into nature and his inner landscape. He walks by the sea, apparently another insinuation of the conscious and distant speculation of the inner processes. As Eve's umbilical cord becomes a telephone cable, becomes the mystic monk's sash, the 'trailing navelcord' of a misbirth, Stephen ponders on the mystery of his own creation: 'Wombed in sin Darkness I was too, made not begotten. By them, the man with my voice and my eyes and a ghostwoman with ashes on her breath' (*U*, 3:46).

Stephen's regression calls upon what Freud, Melanie Klein, Piaget, Cixous, Lacan, Kristeva and others of diverse psychoanalytic outlooks, have defined as an unconscious desire to return to early stages, preceding the ego, relating to the mother. It is this retracing

⁷⁹ This last term was coined by Julian Huxley in 1952, and is quoted in Koestler, *The Ghost in the Machine*, p. 162.

backwards of the ego, in critical moments of friction with the outer world, that generates a yearning for the maternal, for a preconscious biological symbiosis in the womb. Piaget calls this state 'protoplasmic consciousness'.⁸⁰ Exemplified in the Greek authors, it appears in Xefloudas in Odysseus's regressive processes, in Pentzikis's dream and metamorphosis and eventually in Cheimonas as womb-envy permeating all creation in narrative and language.

Stephen's choice, however, is not a backwards movement to his 'houses of decay', for he never visits his uncle's house. The alleged visit takes place only in his imagination, moulding a primary fantasy of return, a background buoying up his attempt to reunite himself with the world. He writes his poem, sea-like, water-like, and bird-like. His reunion with the world takes place at a higher level of the spiral via the symbolic outlet of his writing of a poem. Simultaneously his entrails blend with the universe represented in the physical element of the sea, a symbolic mother, or 'dual' mother in Jung's terms.

The primordial Eden, the *omphalos*, the mahamanvantara (a state of repose), and the Hamletian cloud in the shape of a whale (a derivation also alluding to Jonah) overshadow Stephen's thought. All are signals of yearning for quiescence and withdrawal.⁸¹ Stephen's restlessness craves a vegetative tranquillity, expressed by his consubstantial relation with a primordial father-mother-ocean. All the mythical, mystical and religious symbolic conjunctions alert us to the artistic persona of Stephen performing in a dream-like imaginary landscape in his epiphanized act of writing.

In the swooning and trembling language of *P*, Stephen's epiphanies still maintain their personal immediacy. Sleep and awakening literally take place, in the Dollymount strand (*P*, p. 152) and before his writing of his villanelle. The psychosomatic excitation of his 'all

⁸⁰ J. Piaget, *The Child's Conception of Causality* (London: Kegan Paul, 1930).

⁸¹ 'A man has a manvantara and pralaya every four-and-twenty hours, his period of waking and sleeping; vegetation follows the same rule from year to year as it subsides and revives with the seasons. The world too has its manvataras and pralayas, when the tide-wave humanity approaches its shore, runs through the evolution of its seven races, and ebbs away again, and such a manvantara has been treated by most exoteric regions as the whole cycle of eternity', A. P. Sinnet, *Esoteric Buddhism*, p. 171, quoted in Gilbert, *James Joyce's 'U'*, p. 119.

dewy wet' soul is on open display (*P*, p. 188).⁸² But in *U*'s detached techniques, the distant echoes of these anticipatory processes (of *P*) invade the narrative ironically, like scraps of a memory quizzically mapping out a collage of aesthetic experience. In fact, Stephen's act of writing has maintained all the characteristics of his early epiphanies but transformed from subjective empathy into objective observation. Joyce exploits the sea's biological and mythological properties to project the early vibrations of Stephen's artistic stance. Compare the following passages:

The flood is following me. I can watch it flow past from here (*U*, 3: 282). I am not a strong swimmer. Water cold soft. When I put my face into it in the basin at Clongowes. Can't see! Who is behind me? Out out quickly, quickly! Do you see the tide flowing quickly, [...] A drowning man. His human eyes scream to me of horror of his death. I . . . With him together down . . . I could not save her. Waters bitter death: lost. (*U*, 3: 324-30)

Towards the dawn he awoke. [...] His soul was all dewy wet. Over his limbs in sleep pale waves of light had passed. He lay still, as if his soul lay amid cool waters, conscious of faint sweet music. His mind was waking slowly to a tremulous morning knowledge, a morning inspiration. A spirit filled him, pure as the purest water, sweet as dew, moving as music. [...] His soul was waking slowly, fearing to awake wholly. (*P*, p. 188)

The motif of the drowning man contrasts with the surfacing consciousness of the young Stephen from his sleep. The watery element sustains in its cold and soft, cool and sweet, suffocating and regenerating properties the locus of repose out of which the inspiration springs. There is a difference of the narrative voice and a striking contrast of style in these passages. In *U*'s psychological realism, the reader is thrust into the persona's inner landscape, hardly able to make his own way out of the labyrinth of subtleties. On the contrary, the reader of *P*'s indirect third-person narrator is a spectator who stereoscopically views the hero's action. Thus, the drowning motif of 'Proteus' can be easily conceived as the terminal end of death, haunting Stephen, whereas it is not far away from a sleeping

⁸² This even led critics to assume that Stephen awakes from a wet dream: Charles Rossman, 'Stephen Dedalus' Villanelle', *JJQ*, 12 (1975), 281-93. Bernard Benstock, 'The Temptation of St. Stephen: A View of Villanelle', *JJQ*,

withdrawal and subsequent awakening of the young persona of *P*. Stephen projects his own fear of death and desire for life or creation-birth onto the drowning man. Thus he achieves a symbolic self-submerging into the watery fluidity of his own consubstantial and artistic body of the 'Old Father Ocean' (*U*, 3:483) and/or the mother-sea-water element. He will emerge out of it anew, with the vigour of a symbolic baptism, ready to create and regenerate.

There is a change in the narrative after the drowning man's fantasy. Stephen's memories retreat giving way to a rapid motion of verbal images: a woman and a man, the 'cocklepickers' and their dog, the dead dog, the dream about Bloom, all washing up in the sea's consubstantial and watery blood, coded feminine. Consider the following:

Across the sands of all the world, followed by the sun's flaming sword, to the west, trekking to evening lands. She trudges, schlepps, trains, drags, trascines her load. A tide westering, moondrawn, in her wake. Tides, myriadislanded, within her, blood not mine, oinopa ponton, a wine-dark sea. Behold the handmaid of the moon. In sleep the wet sign calls her hour, bids her rise. Bridebed, childbed, bed of death, ghostchanded. *Omnis caro ad te veniet*. (*U*, 3:391-397)

Stephen's sudden urge to get out of his clothes and his apprehension not to lose his sequence of thoughts and words is expressed as follows,

His lips lipped and mouthed fleshless lips of air: mouth to her moomb. Oomb, allwombing tomb. His mouth molded issuing breath, unspeched: ooeeehah: roar of cataractic planets, globed, blazing, roaring wayawayawayawayaway. Paper. The banknotes, blast them. Old Deasy's letter. Here. Thanking you for your hospitality tear the blank end off. Turning his back to the sun he bent over far to a table of rock and scribbled words. That's twice I forgot to take slips from the library counter. (*U*, 3: 401-407).

The staging of the act of writing clearly reveals an emotional and intellectual outburst unravelling in a curve-like process. Starting with the drowning fantasy, emotion ascends in visual imagery as a montage of outer and inner scenes. The verbal images of the sea-blood, wine-dark sea precipitate the sublimation of emotion in a fusion of images and words. In

fact, language stops operating at that very moment and diffuses in a momentary dissolution of words in sounds, overcharged by psychosomatic responses, expressed in the form of vocalization. The lips 'lipped' out the phonemes in a sonic form, which were rapidly transformed into morphemes. The exhaled air substantiates in the materialized form of the word as it passes through the fingers of the hand 'scribbling' them on paper. The circuit can be schematically described as sea-wave, sound-wave, 'blood-wave', muscular-wave (vibration), image-flow. The orifices of the body (ear, mouth, pores) are the receptacles and the exits of this process. It is the musicality of the sea-body that Joyce exploits here, whose intonations in the 'Sirens' episode Bloom will transcribe in physiological terms: 'The sea they think they hear. Singing. A roar. The blood it is. Souse in ear sometimes. Well, it's a sea. Corpuscle islands' (*U*, 11: 945-6).⁸³

In 'Nausicaa' the twin episode of 'Proteus', Bloom also enacts an incomplete process of writing, which is associated with autoeroticism. This leads Hugh Kenner to consider both writings as containing a masturbatory act.⁸⁴ This is to superimpose Bloom's condition on Stephen. In fact Joyce's exploitation of human physiology and its transcription in literature, whether in sublime or parodying terms, points in a quite different direction. It shows the desire of a living body not as limited to the sexual act itself, but as an all-encompassing phenomenon permeating every organ and function. Eventually the whole enterprise harbours a vitalistic urge carried out by the blood circulatory system and which operates on a micro- and macro-level, travelling, transforming, transubstantiating, displacing and sublimating sensory and emotional currents of thought. Catharsis is staged in both metaphorical and literal terms: words, language, music and bodily waste are conjoined in this artistic outlet.⁸⁵ After writing his vampire poem, Stephen urinates in the sea, his body-

⁸³ In the 'Lestrygonians' episode Bloom says about poetry: 'Those literary etherial people they are all. Dreamy cloudy, symbolistic. Esthetes they are. I wouldn't be surprised if it was that kind of food you see produces the like waves of the brain the poetical' (*U*, 8:543-5).

⁸⁴ Hugh Kenner, 'Maelstrom Reflux' in *U*, p. 104.

⁸⁵ See an example of parody of linguistic musicality focusing on the physiological function at the expense of the emotional: 'Tenderness it welled: slow, swelling, full it throbbed. That's the chat. Ha give! Take! Throb, a throb, a

waste reuniting him with 'the sweet mother', its vocalization reverberating with the poem's flow of language: 'Listen: a fourword wavespeech: seesoo, hrss, rsseeiss, ooos. Vehement breath of waters [...]' (*U*, 3:454). The catharsis is complete and a quiescence of body and soul achieved 'Pain is far' (*U*, 3:44).

Joyce brings together primal and terminal matter by skipping the emotional layers in between. His physiological earthing of emotion (*P*, p. 152) reveals the processes underlying the anxiety or the stress of creation.⁸⁶ He stages the act of writing as a process of self-transcendence, an attempt at reunion of the self with both the universe and the self's vegetative oneness.⁸⁷ The cognitive patterns of his narrative sustain this surrendering to the mythical, mystical and religious archetypes. These patterns navigate the return to preconscious, or even better, unconscious processes pertaining to a primordial symbiosis with the progenitors, namely the mother (the ambiguity of her gender to be discussed later). It is this plunge to a state of repose or relaxation, Jung's 'night journey', which the archetypal motifs of death-resurrection or drowning-baptism, recapitulate in Stephen's sleeping and awakening, in his fantasy of a drowning man and in the cloudy atmosphere of the chapter. The rebirth motif takes place in a process of surfacing or awakening. Its fundamental outlet is the act of writing, the symbolic reunion with the universe, the earthing of emotion by meeting the world at a higher turn of the spiral of the human hierarchy. From this perspective, Stephen's act of writing is an attempt at getting out of his despondency, or in biological terms an act of *self-repair*.

pulsing proud erect. Words? Music? No it's what's behind. [...] Bloom. Flood of warm jamjam lickitup secretness flowed to flow in music out, in desire, dark to lick flow invading. Tipping her, tepping her tapping her topping her. Tup. Pores to dilate dilating. Tup. The joy the feel the warm the. Tup. To pour o'er sluices pouring gushes. Flood, gush, flow, joygush, tupthrob. Now! Language of love' (*U*, 11:701-709).

⁸⁶ The early Stephen of *P* is more explicit in the description of epiphanic moments: 'His throat ached with a desire to cry aloud [...]. He felt his cheeks aflame and his throat throbbing with song. There was a lust of wandering in his feet that burned to set out for the ends of the earth. [...]' (*P*, p. 150). [...] 'His cheeks were aflame; his body was aglow; his limbs were trembling. On and on and on and on he strode [...]' (*P*, p. 152).

⁸⁷ Koestler coined the term 'self-transcendence' possibly under the influence of the theories of Lévy-Bruhl, especially his book *Primitive Mentality* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1923). Lévy-Bruhl, an anthropologist who greatly influenced Freud and Jung, coined the term *participation mystique* for phenomena of self-transcendence in primitive societies such as magic connections between events in space and time reflected in rites and observances.

The archetypal symbol of the sea has two broad frames of reference: one concerns the mythical fabrications around its magical regenerating powers and the other concerns its biological and physiological properties. The former is another way into subjectivity: the formulation and emancipation of the ego out of the family triangle, or 'family romance'. Its tripartite formula is conceptualized in the religious form of the doctrine of the Trinity, itself derived from primitive, pagan, religious structures. The latter endorses Galvani's vital force, a derivation from Aristotelian entelechy. Its materialized metamorphoses give rise to Homer's wine-dark sea, an allusion to blood and its vitalistic and circulatory properties, transcribed in the metaphors of tide-ebb and ceaseless fluidity underlying the operation of language and the act of creation. Thus, the sea motif in its Protean transformation becomes a blood motif, circulating the stress of creativity all over the stratified hierarchy of the human whole. Its relieving and releasing outlet is manifested in the act of creation via psychosomatic characteristics, substantiating its materiality in the bodily act of writing, and its linguistic crystallization in the word-flesh. Language imitates bodily sounds, substantiates them in phonemes and morphemes. It becomes the mediator between the somatic and the intellectual. Through the blood motif recurring in all the episodes, language substantiates the body in word-play, rhythm, intonation, musicality and pulsating acoustic waves. These are transformed into puns, rhymes, poems, songs and congealed narrative fragments, all of them eventually dissolving in Molly's liquefied monologue, accompanied by her menstrual blood.⁸⁸

Joyce's sea-blood motif, ebbing and flowing, brings together the loose-end metaphors of regeneration/degeneration, and ties them up in the body's physiology as manifested in Stephen's body-language and in language itself. In his epiphanized moments, Stephen typically undergoes a state of excitation which has a circular pattern. First, he goes through

⁸⁸ On the impact of Molly's menstruation on her monologue, language and narrative, see three critics of different outlooks: Richard Ellmann, 'Why Molly Bloom Menstruates', in *'Ulysses' on the Liffey*, pp. 159-176; Dorrit Cohn, 'The Autonomous Monologue: "Penelope" as Paradigm', in *Transparent Minds*, pp. 219; Christine Froula, *Modernism's Body*, pp. 92-100. Each acknowledges the biological rhythm of her language and associates its

a crisis of despondency deriving from his 'houses of decay'. Subsequently, he experiences fear caused by the appearance of a dog and culminating in his fantasy of a drowned man, his body entering a state of emergency. Fear activates the sympathetic-adrenergic system, and puts it in a state of flight, or fight, proliferating emotion and thought.⁸⁹ This emotional state precipitates the rapid motion of images which follow suggesting preverbal excitation. The montaging of the seascapes as 'tide westering, blood, wine-dark seas' stops at the peak point of this excitation. The tiding up of watery images gives the rhythm of emotional excitation prompting a cathartic opening of the self. In *P*'s explicit description, a similar process is described as hyperemia, overwhelming the inflamed body of the young man, a nervous excitation which leads to a trembling moulding of language. The same process, without the explicit reference to tremors, takes place in 'Proteus'. His lips lip the fleshless air and mould the issuing breath in words-flesh. The fluidity of the vocalization also recalls the flow of blood. In the case of writing, Joyce calls our attention to this protean mutation of emotion, of one emotional state activating another. The tension is not to be explosively dissipated in laughter. It is slowly drained away, via the ebbing of the tides, aiming at a vegetative quiescence.

In a state of fear Stephen recollects putting his face into the basin at Glongowes. This is a moment of suffocation, the cold water being the stimulus of physical contraction. But in his state of excitation, generating the rapid motion of images, the tides flow; they become blood flowing into the sea. Through the mediation of language, flowing blood is magically transformed into words.

On swift sail flaming

From storm and south

He comes, pale vampire,

looseness with Molly's menses.

⁸⁹ For this function of emotion, see W. B. Cannon, *Bodily Changes in Pain, Hunger, Fear and Rage* (New York: Dappletone, 1924). For the Icarian situation explicitly displayed in Stephen's first epiphany see *P*: 'an instant of wild flight had delivered him and the cry of triumph which his lips withheld cleft his brain' (*P*, p. 150).

Mouth to my mouth. (U, 7:522-5)

The complete form of the poem, stated for the first time in 'Aeolus', has a first-person immediacy. In an alternation of warm (*flaming*) and cold (*vampire*), it seems to allude to the reanimation of a corpse which rises from a tomb-womb, another alternation of warm-cold. Stephen turns his back to the sun and writes his poem under its light. The experience of the moment is an opening of the self, an expansion or dilation of the blood vessels. The body's position, a bending 'over the table of a rock', precipitates the cathartic end: 'he bent, ending'. This posture of the body, similar to the weeping cathartic outlet, via the tear ducts, is accompanied by long, sighing expirations, mostly manifested in the prolonged vocalization formulating the poem.

Joyce alerts us to the process of writing as a cathartic outlet, by removing the poem from the landscape. Here, as well as in 'Aeolus', the respiratory function is emphasized in the act of writing, expressed as 'fleshless lips of air', 'Moulded issuing breath' and represented in vocalization. Joyce stages writing as exhalation, deflation, voice and logos. This logos, however, should not be capitalized, for both its derivation and final destination is blood, the flesh which becomes the word that will never pass away.⁹⁰ This bodily representation of the act of writing reflects language's musicality and rhythm, but also meaning and interpretation. In Kristeva's neo-Freudian, psycho-linguistic approach, it is called semiotic activity. 'These semiotic operations', she says, '(rhythm, intonation), and their dependence vis-a-vis the body's drives are observable through muscular contractions and the libidinal or sublimated cathexis that accompany vocalizations'.⁹¹ The contracting and expanding operations within language constitute its rhythm, relating to biological origins; the primitive's tom-tom with its pulsating beat, which anticipated the lyric poetic rhythm, 'the simplest verbal vesture of an instant of emotion', (P, p. 186). In the reversed world of

⁹⁰ That is exactly what Cheimonas does when he names his logos - the body's voice - emmanuel, without capitalising the initial letter, a degradation of the sublime, theological Logos as contrasted to flesh.

⁹¹ Kristeva, *Desire in Language*, p. 134. The semiotic operates within the symbolic, its linguistic counterpart referring to Lacan's symbolic order of the Father.

comedy, it appears as punning, an association of sound and meaning whose sublimated form becomes rhyme. This is why Stephen's epiphanized moments result in the writing of a poem whereas Bloom's parody of epiphanic thought has a humorous or ridiculous punning outcome.

In the embryonic, 'prima materia' narrative of 'Proteus', where Telemachus 'does not yet bear the body', the sexual excitation is pushed one stage backwards, to a peristaltic function which ends in Stephen's urination: an early anticipation of sexual release, and also a parody of his act of writing.

Under the upswelling tide he saw the writhing weeds lift languidly, and sway reluctant arms, hissing up their petticoats, in whispering water swaying and upturning coy silver fronds. Day by day: night by night : lifted, flooded and let fall. Lord, they are weary; and whispered to, they sigh. (My emphasis, *U*, 3:461-5)

The description of the watery matter of life in a state of relaxation recapitulates the organic and artistic processes which took place. Nonetheless these rhythmic operations sustain the cathartic bias of the text. Organic functions of this sort abound in the narrative. The 'peristaltic prose' of 'Lestrygonians' is a case in point. Also the last two episodes seem to lead the whole book into a state of relaxation. A slow release of emotion in 'Ithaca' activates the body's 'juices' and in 'Penelope' it expels the body's 'fat' in menstrual blood and liquefied language.⁹² In fact, those two last episodes verify the book's self-transcendent tendency and its opening up to the world. The 'Ithaca' episode attempts to reunite Bloom and Stephen in a cosmic perspective. 'All events are resolved into their cosmic physical etc. equivalents [...] Bloom and Stephen thereby become heavenly bodies, wanderers like the stars at which they gaze', said Joyce to Budgen.⁹³ Likewise, Molly's final 'yes' in Penelope seals the text's openness with erotic desire and surrender of the self.

⁹² Cohn discusses the linguistic texture of Penelope in this context of relaxation. "But Joyce not only places the monologizing mind in a body at rest; he also places that body in calm surroundings" (*Transparent Minds*, p. 222).

⁹³ *Letters of James Joyce*, ed. by Stuart Gilbert, vol I (New York: Viking, 1957), pp. 159-60; quoted *Ulysses* ed. by Jeri Johnson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 958.

2. 6. Conclusion

By associating *U* with the functions of a living organism, Joyce opened a vast field for interdisciplinary research on literature and writing, which has already been pursued in philosophical, critical and psychoanalytic studies. From our point of view, the book is also a fertile ground for psycho-physiological research, owing to the various psychosomatic disturbances humorously parading through the chapters (e.g. flatulence in the 'Aeolous' episode, peristalsis in 'Lestrygonians', abnormalities of birth related with the birth of language in the 'Oxen of the Sun'). By highlighting the body's functions, mostly for the sake of comic effect, and moreover, in a context of the stream of consciousness' introspection of the protagonists, Joyce achieved a unique combination of aesthetic and physiological aspects of human nature. From this perspective, his art takes on the characteristics of a scientific discovery, just as science is projected as another relative discourse, 'alongside the other discourses making up the world of *U*'.⁹⁴ The conjunction of art with science in the schemes sanctions an epistemology of artistic creation the exploitation of which we will encounter in Cheimonas.

Likewise the act of writing is mostly thematized by modernist authors as a self-referential element of the novel itself. Focusing on the disclosure of the physiological substratum of emotions and removing the veils of sentimentality in the act of creation, Joyce managed to reveal the bodily substratum of creation. The emotional retrenchment of *U* becomes a distant, quasi-scientific focus on physiological and natural phenomena. Thus, the thematization of the act of writing reveals the bodily processes in which it is incubated.

There is a whole literature on Joyce's sexuality, perversion, desire and language. In the main these approaches build their arguments on metapsychology, that is on a more or less philosophical, psychological reading. Our point of view, although complementary, is quite

⁹⁴ M. Bell, *Literature, Modernism and Myth*, p. 74.

different, for example, from Lacanian metapsychology. Our basic assumption is that Joyce's text alerts us to the physiological processes underlying psychological phenomena. Our attempt to map out these physiological processes, therefore, moves on the borderline between metapsychology and psychophysiology, on what we called degenerating-regenerating, undoing-redoing, processes operating in the overall hierarchy of the human organism. In Joyce's hierarchical disposition of art, there are no sharp boundaries between the different layers. In fact, phenomena of the lower stratum, bodily or psychological, easily surface under the device of stream of consciousness and the physiological lens of the author. If Koestler's assumption that 'All creative activity is a kind of do-it-yourself therapy' (*The Ghost in the Machine*, p. 177) is an echo of Joyce's ability to 'psoakoonaloose myself any time I want' (*FW*, 522.34), then the scene of writing in 'Proteus' reveals the physiology of writing in its closest relationship to the nervous system, simultaneously tracing its links with language - Joyce's celebrated domain. As we will show in the following chapters, this conjoining of the body with the text, which itself contains a vast amalgamation of diverse fields of human thought, is the paradigm which the Greek authors emulate. It marks the outset of a new period in literature, probing into man's interior landscape and creativity.

CHAPTER THREE

Chapter Three: Stelios Xefloudas (1902-1985)

3.1. Introduction

Xefloudas's name and work are associated with innovation in the Greek novel and its orientation toward the inner man, with the so-called 'introverted' novel. Greek criticism has focused more on the controversial issue of interior monologue in Xefloudas's work than its relation to Joyce's work in terms other than this particular narrative technique.¹ The author's frequent references within his texts to French poets and authors such as Mallarmé, Valéry, Gide and Proust generated interest in the francophone side of his literary sources. However, both his literary and critical works display a vast indebtedness to the broader European literary legacy, including Shakespeare, Cervantes, Dante and Homer.

Xefloudas shares with Joyce this European background, including the symbolist legacy and the modernist use of myth. Inward adventure and the motif of wandering constitute the crux of Xefloudas's ideas. Aesthetic consciousness, exile, myth, and the body as a focus of sexual desire and gender problems are all grouped around these themes. Although Xefloudas aspires to write in the light of Joyce's legacy, his literary style is essentially different from that of Joyce. Aspiring to, rather than achieving, Joyce's legacy, he is preoccupied with the renewal of the Greek novel and the demonstration of the techniques of introversion. He focuses on the thematization of novel-making at the expense of the fictional character of his work. Thus his works lean rather to the lyrical essay genre than to the novel.²

¹ At least three of his most important critics, D. Nikolareizis, K. Stergiopoulos and M. Vitti, associated his work with the introduction of interior monologue into Greek literature. In Stergiopoulos's words, Xefloudas was the first 'to systematically develop interior monologue in our country', in 'I Pezografia tou S. Xefloudas ke o Esoterikos Monologos', *Epoches*, 43 (1966), 427-31 (p. 427). Xefloudas himself does not deny this role for himself although he does not claim to be the only one who used it. 'Certainly I am not boasting that I am the first to introduce interior monologue to Greek literature; there are also other texts with monologues [...]', in 'Stelios Xefloudas speaks about his work', *Politis*, special issue, November (1983), 22-31(p. 22).

² Vitti characterizes *Ta Tetradia tou Pavlou Foteinou* as belonging to 'a vague genre where the lyric essay, the diary, the prose-poem, and the autobiographic narration participate' (*I Genia tou Trianta*, p. 280).

The theme of aesthetic consciousness predominates in Xefloudas's early work, which, like Joyce's, draws upon the symbolist legacy although with considerable differences. In his later work the inward adventure is associated more with the problems of everyday modern man and with the archetype of the Odyssean wandering traveller, as well as with the chivalric personage of Don Quixote. Intertextual links, loans from and allusions to Joyce can be found in this later period of the author's work, particularly in his *Kyklos* (1944), *Odyseas Choris Ithaki* (1957) and *Odyseas* (1974).³ This shift in Xefloudas's work is also demonstrated in his book *To Synchrone Mythistorema* (1955), where the author gives us a good account of his understanding of *U* as shown in the first chapter of this thesis. Although aware of Joyce's dissections of reality, exploration of the inner self, and use of language, Xefloudas fails to understand the comic character of *U*, and consequently Joyce's mock-heroic style. Influenced by his own existential and psychological predisposition, Xefloudas's approach to *U* focuses on its serious aspects, particularly 'the creator's tragic anxiety to encompass the whole universe in his book'.⁴

Accordingly, in his subversion of the Homeric myth, Xefloudas employs the body only as a metaphor for a humanism saturated by sexuality and desire in language. His anti-heroic Odysseus embarks upon a quest for identity and otherness, the latter coded feminine as represented in Calypso. *Odyseas* is an erotic voyage into literature and myth guided by the body's immense desire for return to origins, that is, to an age of innocence, pre-historic and pre-mythic, that harks back to the instinctual and the bodily. Exile and the myth of eternal return motivate this journey.⁵

³ Ithaki and Odyseas are the transliterated forms of the Greek words for Ithaca and Odysseus and are used only for the titles of the books, while for the title of Cavafy's poem, I maintain Keeley's and Sherrard's 'Ithaka' see ft. 79.

⁴ *To Synchrone Mythistorema* (Athens: Ikaros, 1955), p. 64.

⁵ We borrow the term 'eternal return' from Eliade's essay which deals with the myth of eternal repetition as a projection of man onto a mythical time, extrahuman and ahistorical, to a place in time that is cosmic, cyclical and infinite. According to Eliade the abolition of time comes through the imitation of archetypes and the repetition of paradigmatic gestures. He explores this primitive ontology in the man of traditional civilizations in contrast to 'historical man' (modern man) who voluntarily creates history (linearism and the progressive conception of history). The myth of eternal return sustains the nostalgia for the return to a lost paradise, recreation and regeneration and in the final analysis for the abolition of time. See Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of Eternal Return*, trans. by Willard R. Trask (New York: Pantheon Books, 1954).

Xefloudas's transposition of the Odysseus myth shares with Joyce pity for the predicament of twentieth-century man. However, in Xefloudas, the emphasis is on the inward adventure of the artist-to-be. Although his Odysseus strives against his heroic past towards ordinary life, he is also a monologist, the author of his own story. In contrast to Bloom's unawareness of his mythical properties, Xefloudas's Odysseus is conscious of his historical and narrative role. Thus the contestation of the heroic past occurs through an ironic undoing of the mythical properties of Odysseus and of the linear conventionality of the narrative. Heroism is ridiculed from an anti-heroic perspective, questioning history, literature and gender stereotypes. The arousal of the body's voice discloses the desire repressed within the structure of myth, which emerges as the only hope for relieving contemporary man from his plight. Sensuality and eroticism then become the origins, the means and the completed ends of this journey toward identity and artistic emancipation. Primitivism and feminine otherness, incarnated in Calypso, are summoned to sustain the polyphony of a text which aspires to be an amalgamation of genres and voices. Through the appropriation of this other voice and body, Odysseus will be able to speak his own voice with musicality and rhythm, and to re-unify himself with the world.

3.2. The Legacy of Symbolism and the Inward Adventure

The inward adventure of the would-be artist starts with Xefloudas's early works. *Ta Tetradia tou Pavlou Foteinou* (1930) and *Esoteriki Symfonia* (1932) were considered innovative prose for their period.⁶ Their association with interior monologue was developed in the following years. However, recent criticism has revealed the questionable character of

⁶ Xefloudas's first novel was considered a new 'European genre', with originality and inventiveness. Aris Berlis, 'Stelios Xefloudas', in *I Mesopolemiki Pezografia*, VI, pp. 268-288 (p. 271). Petros Charis, G. Theotokas, G. Kotzioulas, Napoleon Lapathiotis, Petros Spandonidis and George Delios distinguished the innovative characteristics of this novel (ibid., p. 271). See also Theotokas's claim that Xefloudas's book can be considered one of the characteristic chronicles of the so-called Generation of the Thirties, *Imerologio tis Argos ke tou Demoniou* (Athens:

Xefloudas's monologue.⁷ Kakavoulis's assessment that these texts 'can be evaluated historically as among the first texts that thematized IM in prewar Greek literary production' seems to recapitulate the long-term debate on Xefloudas's use of interior monologue.⁸ Actually, Xefloudas's thematization of the techniques of introversion and of the inward adventure might well have contributed to the early criticism's misunderstandings about the use of interior monologue in his works.

Both of Xefloudas's first novels are experimental in character, thematizing the techniques of their own creation. Yet their content, although breaking with the realist tradition and focusing on the presentation of the writing subject's consciousness, is quite unlike Joyce's work. Both are diary-like, projecting the first-person narrator's inner thoughts and presenting the author's writing consciousness in progress.⁹ The common ground shared by almost all Xefloudas's critics is that, in these two first books, he initiated the exploration of man's inner self, the journey to selfhood and aesthetic consciousness.

The first-person narrator of these novels is a would-be artist monologist who ignores external reality, exposing his inner self in an attempt 'to mould the material his consciousness yields each time to write a novel - a venture that he does not finally manage'.¹⁰ The diary character of the books highlights this confessional exposure, which comprises elements of poetry and prose, laboriously flaunting its symbolist character. There is no obvious story in either book apart from the adventurous inner wanderings of the writing subject, the inward experience of a traveller within his own self. This is and will

Pikili Stoa Leschi, 1989), p. 20.

⁷ At least three critics, Nikolareizis (1962), Vitti (1989), and Kazantzis (1991), have questioned whether Xefloudas ever used this technique. See D. Nikolareizis, *Dokimia Kritikis* (Athens: Fexis, 1962) p. 196, Vitti, *I Genia tou Trianta*, T. Kazantzis, *I Pezografia tis Thessalonikis 1912-1983* (Thessaloniki: Vantias 1991), p. 180.

⁸ Maria Kakavoulia, 'Interior Monologue: Recontextualizing a Modernist practice', in D. Tziouvas, ed., *Greek Modernism and Beyond*, p. 140.

⁹ See Sachinis (1978), Vitti (ibid), Giannakakis (1990), Angelatos (1996).

¹⁰ Eleni Giannakakis, *Narcissus in the Novel: A Study of Self-referentiality in the Greek Novel, 1930-1945* (unpublished doctoral thesis, King's College, University of London, 1990), p. 54. See also Dimitris Angelatos, 'O Seferis ke to Mythistorematiko Eidos: pros mia Istoriki Poiitiki tou Imerologiou', in *G. Seferis. Filologikes ke Ermineftikes Proseggiseis*, ed. by M. Pieris (Athens: Patakis, 1996), pp. 149-164, and P. Mackridge, 'European Influences on the Greek Novel During the 1930s', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, 3:1 (1985), 1-20 (p. 4).

remain the basic characteristic of all Xefloudas's work, an Odyssey of the inner modern man, a journey to selfhood and to identity.

In Xefloudas's early work, the aesthetic emancipation takes place after the narrator's wandering around Europe, within the foggy, grey atmosphere of Paris, where the narrator's 'interior reconstruction' takes place through 'Valérian exercises'.¹¹ The description of the space is entirely dependent upon the narrator's own perspective, reality being reworked by the narrator's mind. Time is undefined, unfolding between light and darkness, day and night, as an uninterrupted psychological continuum. The texts, however, hardly move beyond the aesthetic experience of the writing subject or the rhythm deriving from the tremors of his creativity. Their material barely formulates fiction, or a story other than the theorization of fiction making. This thematization along with the lack of plot and character makes certain critics question the literary character of these texts.¹²

However, the thematization of the theory of fiction in Xefloudas's texts is imbued with symbolist restlessness. In *Ta Tetradia tou Pavlou Foteinou*, the anonymous narrator undergoes psychosomatic experiences similar to Stephen's in the 'Proteus' episode of *U*. The narrator-monologist and Stephen share similar intricacies in their meditations and the despondency of the would-be artist. Xefloudas employs the sea motif, although without Joyce's physicality, as a cosmic phenomenon metaphorically indicating his narrator's psychological state. His narrator's 'inner tempest' (p. 27) is comparable to Stephen's psychosomatic performance in the act of writing in 'Proteus':

¹¹ *Ta Tetradia tou Pavlou Foteinou*, p. 44.

¹² 'In his search for the inner man, Xeflúdas feels justified in omitting any details of his characters' physical appearance or of their social and family background. Indeed the only personage in *Ta Tetradia* is Pávlos Fotinós, himself, Xeflúdas' alter ego, a solipsist who is seeking "to allow that which floods over me to find its purest and most sincere expression" (146)', P. Mackridge, 'European Influences on the Greek Novel During the 1930s', p. 13. See also I. M. Panayiotopoulos: 'Xefloudas never titled his books, even those in which some movement of characters and events is clearly guessed, "novels"- maybe he dared not title them so', 'Anisicha Chronia', in *Ta Prosopa ke ta Keimena*, vol 2 (Athens: Aetos, 1943), p. 215. Xefloudas grouped himself and Joyce with 'the authors of a miraculous monotony'. In their novels 'there is not the variety we observe in the classic novel, the alternation of events, the different characters of the personages, the progress of myth, the use of space. The author mainly elicits from "the inside" [...]; the paratactic images become [...] dream; [...] a continuation of himself, of his world [...]', in Xefloudas, 'The Authors of Miraculous Monotony', *Nea Estia*, 69 (1961), 723-4 (p. 723).

Oceans of oblivion touch me with their invincible waves within the immeasurable time which suddenly runs through my mind. [...] I feel deeply in this universe, which silently pours out its music, all the inconceivable poetry of silence'. [...] 'No No! Upright! Within the succession of time! - Crush my body, this pensive form! - Drink, my breast, the birth of the wind! - A coolness emerging from the sea - it gives me my soul... - O! briny power! - Let's run to the waves to re-emerge from them revived!' (*Ta Tetradia tou Pavlou Foteinou*, p. 27)

Water cold and soft. [...] Out quickly, quickly! Do you see the tide flowing quickly in all sides, sheeting the lows of sand quickly, shellcocoacoloured? [...] waters: bitter death: lost. (*U*, 3: 325-330)

Tides, myriadislanded, within her, blood not mine, *oinopa ponton*, a wine dark sea. [...] *Omnis caro ad te veniet*. (*U*, 3: 393-397)

Xefloudas employs the body as a locus of psychosomatic anxiety linked with artistic creation.¹³ However, his text lacks Joyce's physicality and irony. It focuses on the narrator's psychosomatic expression of the tremors of creativity as well as the musicality of his inner rhythm, elements deriving from the symbolist legacy. The loneliness and isolation of the narrator might be an allusion to Stephen's despondency as, in the same chapter, the narrator claims that: 'Solitude nourished this interior monologue' (*ibid*, p. 22). However, this is nothing but a thematization of interior monologue and perhaps an attempted assimilation of Joyce's style. There are similarities in *Ta Tetradia tou Pavlou Foteinou* between Xefloudas's narrator and Stephen's interior monologue; they even share the recollection of their study in the library of Sainte Geneviève in Paris (p. 50). However, in general terms, Xefloudas's early work has but few similarities with Joyce's and all of them derive from their common symbolist background.

Xefloudas's perspective on *U* is permeated by his insistence on the introspective character of the novel as developed in his mature critical work.¹⁴ Characters, plot, narrative

¹³ The narrator of *Ta Tetradia tou Pavlou Foteinou* suffers from shivers of thought (p. 13), 'disturbed sleep' (p. 19), 'an indefinite desire', and 'a vertigo which, sometimes, caused me intoxication' (p. 24).

¹⁴ *To Synchrono Mythistorema* (1955), p. 60. Xefloudas's essay demonstrates the author's deep knowledge of the European literary tradition and Joyce's work. See the citations presented in the historical introduction, chapter one, pp. 17-18, 24.

techniques and the representation of reality are all subdued in the author's inner world.¹⁵ The characterless novel without a plot is maintained in Xefloudas's early work.¹⁶ The shift from *Kyklos* (1943) to his *Odysseus* (1967) seems to encompass more elements from Joyce's work.¹⁷ Thus, the employment of reality, repetition and intertextuality, musicality and rhythm gradually appear in his later work inextricably associated with the use of the Odyssean myth.¹⁸ With *Kyklos*, Xefloudas attempts to write a novel in which there are characters, even in a rudimentary, shadowy form, engaged with the archetype of the questing voyager. In his later work two characters from literary tradition support the inner quest, namely Odysseus and Don Quixote. We will deal with the former in relation to *U*.

The archetypal figure of Odysseus occupies an important role in Xefloudas's work; it props up the quest for both aesthetic accomplishment and self-becoming. The Odyssean quest is a master metaphor and allegory for the whole of the author's work and looks back to *U* in certain ways: through the exploration of man's inner space, the thematization of aesthetic consciousness, the use of myth, the employment of the body, and desire and feminine otherness, although with considerable differences in all these aspects. All the aforementioned are welded together with Xefloudas's existential meditations on the destiny of the modern individual. The theme of exile seems to predominate in the thoughts of Xefloudas's heroes, who, cut off from society, are absorbed by their inner lives.

¹⁵ Thus, when Xefloudas speaks about the two basic characters of *U* he takes them as vehicles of the author's self: 'Under this twin disguise, Joyce shows us his entire self' (*To Synchrono Mythistorema* p. 63). Xefloudas himself, as we shall see in his novels, takes no pains to shape any characters. In general he presents one personage, usually the author's surrogate whose voice dominates the whole narrative.

¹⁶ In criticizing the didactic and moral character of the French literary tradition of the philosophical and moralist novel, Xefloudas says of Joyce: 'In Joyce we find nothing like that. Anyway the best contemporary novels have no plot [...] they do not seek to prove or disprove anything. A technique and a content thoroughly new make his work unique in the history of literature' (ibid, p. 65).

¹⁷ Stergiopoulos distinguishes two different phases in Xefloudas's work. The first one is from *Ta Tetradia* to *Kyklos* where the 'individualization of the objective' dominates with symbolist elements, where 'the setting is impressionist and the propensity dreamy'. In contrast, in the second phase, that is from *Odysseas choris Ithaki* to *O Diktatoras* (Athens: I Ekdoseis ton Filon, 1964), 'the author tends to objectify the individual'. In Kostas Stergiopoulos (1966), 427-431 (p. 429). For a similar analysis of the work, see also E. Giannakakis (1990), p. 257.

¹⁸ 'Joyce, in contrast, wants to present a complete picture, because the universe is for him a totality in interrelationship and what we call consequence does not exist. [...] He presents the same theme fragmentarily in different parts of his work which the reader has to put together. [...] There is certainly a particular rhythm in Joyce's work, where the old is entangled with the new; the inwardness and the outward reality have the same meaning: there is always a shining darkness within the light.' (Xefloudas, *To Synchrono Mythistorema*, pp. 64-5).

Kyklos (1943) signals the turning-point in Xefloudas's work, initiating the Odyssean quest in more realistic terms than in his early novels. The book deals with thirty-six hours of Filippus's life, the specification of time being reminiscent of *U*'s day. Filippus is a traveller of fortune, both in the allegoric and the literal sense, returning from the war. The book is formed around the motif of the hero as an outcast, a strange-looking presence among the city crowd, an alienated man.¹⁹ Cut off from family, nation, city, culture and class allegiances, this character fits the familiar modernist motif of the hero as an outcast, Stephen Dedalus being the prime example.²⁰ One can also trace the Joycean influence upon this text in Filippus's wanderings. Much like Bloom's, Filippus's visits and stops at certain places could be taken as allusions to Joyce's text: he crosses a bridge;²¹ he goes to a bar called 'the light blue mermaid' (p. 39), full of sailors and seductive women;²² there he is seduced by a bar woman whom he takes to his hotel room.²³ The bar scene bears a certain resemblance to the Ormond bar, for instance the women have dyed hair like the barmaids (bronze-haired Miss Douce and gold-haired Miss Kennedy), and the enchantment comes from a woman's voice whose song evokes the bar atmosphere. Filippus also encounters a funeral, enters a court, the library, and a brothel, while his visit to the circus and his transformation into a clown are directly reminiscent of Bloom's humiliation in the 'Circe' episode.

However, Xefloudas's style is essentially different from Joyce's. Joyce's mockeries, and the stepwise building of the roundness of Bloom's character, come through the bland

¹⁹ The representation of Filippus is vague as we do not know anything about his identity apart from the fact that he is short and dressed in black and white. He arrives in an unnamed city with a river, upon the bridge of which he starts his meditation about himself and the surrounding environment.

²⁰ 'From the very first moment he realized that people were looking at him with curiosity, they thought of him as suspicious, different from themselves, as if he were walking upon his hands, upside down, with his feet high in the air' (*Kyklos*, p. 13). See also Malcolm Bradbury, 'The cities of modernism' in *Modernism 1890-1930*, pp. 96-104 (p. 100-1).

²¹ Bloom crosses Dublin's bridges several times during the day.

²² The atmosphere is very much as in the cabman's shelter in the 'Eumaeus' episode with elements from 'Sirens', such as the music, the name and the seductive atmosphere of the bar. The intoxicated men, the prostitutes and the buffoon's performance echo elements from the Circe episode.

²³ Bloom also in the 'Sirens' episode goes to the Ormond hotel bar where the barmaids are the temptresses standing for the Homeric sirens; Simon Dedalus and other drinkers sing patriotic and sentimental songs and music seems to be the real temptress. Similarly Bloom goes to a funeral, visits the library, and in the 'Circe' episode he goes into a trial

presentation of external events with the distant eye of an impersonal creator. The mockery is implicit, not stated. By contrast, in Xefloudas, reality is totally subservient to the character's inner self and is employed to advertise the text's fictitiousness.²⁴ Xefloudas's characters carry much more of the narrative's consciousness in them than Joyce's. Most of the time they seem to be the author's mouthpieces, participating in or thinking on the process of the narrative. His Odysseus says:

You are free to believe or not to believe my story. I cannot assure you whether it is real or imaginary.

In no real story do we know where the truth ends and imagination begins. The same also happens in life.²⁵

In the progress of Xefloudas's work, his insistence on thematizing the techniques of novel making is transformed into a kind of interpretative commentary on works that his text is indebted to. The anti-heroic and the mock-heroic are thematized. We are told that Filippos is a ridiculed hero (p. 82) and the epic is found not in the Homeric narrative but in peoples' everyday lives and inner condition. Filippos's allegedly heroic identity is challenged through the questioning of the heroic identity of Odysseus by comparison with the deeds of Don Quixote:

What would Odysseus have been like when he arrived in Ithaca! A stranger among people, returning from the war. So, one morning, nobody would be waiting for him at the small port of his island. A stranger in an insignificant harbour, such a poor hero of fiction. More comic than Don Quixote, a tragic man who defeated all but himself. (*Kyklos*, p. 122)

The comparison of Odysseus and Don Quixote, of a mythic hero and a parody of a hero, transforms the 'epic of action' (p. 52) into a theatre of man's inner life. Xefloudas uses the

in the Nighttown of Dublin.

²⁴ Then, as soon as he arrived, as soon as he disembarked from the ship, travellers surrounding him spoke as if they were reading a laborious book, incomprehensible because of the mind's contrivances, the acrobatics of spirit; they moved within an abstract world, where all came to be ideas, shapes, numbers' (*Kyklos*, p. 6). And elsewhere, 'The rain was non-existent. Figures like ghosts walked along and talked with him, faces with no particular expression' (*Kyklos*, p. 64).

²⁵ *Odysseas Choris Ithaki*, 1957, p. 9.

circus as a metaphor for this theatre of man's inner life.²⁶ In the subtext of *Kyklos*, the Homeric Odyssey and the chivalric adventures of Don Quixote sustain the anti-heroic and the Joycean mock-heroic tendencies, respectively.²⁷ The former provides the heroic deeds disputed by the humanistic values of the text, while the latter supplies the ridicule, and the futility of the heroic, which are vividly represented in the circus performance of the main character.²⁸

Xefloudas's text, however, is also suffused with nostalgia for myth, a modernist characteristic also maintained in his two Odysseus novels.²⁹ Literature is to fulfill the need for myth in the life of the modern individual.³⁰ This venture is undertaken by the re-writing of the Odyssean myth, saturated with both nostalgia and disavowal of the past, in Xefloudas's later Odysseus novel. Thus Xefloudas employs the Odysseus myth as a useful parallel to modern man's inward adventures suffused with existential anxiety. Within this theoretical framework, myth itself also seems to be in exile from modernity. Literature is the only solace for modern man, in order to be able to dream and to imagine again. The Odyssean quest launches the theme of eternal return to origins, associated with Homer's Odyssey: 'Homer gave the eternal image of Man in each of his returns from war' (*Odysseas Choris Ithaki*, p. 38). But the ordinary man of modernity, the historical man who tries to escape the consequences of civilization, turns to a pre-historical and/or unhistorical mythical past to experience his Odyssey within himself in the timeless journey of recurrence and return.³¹

²⁶ 'Possibly we have to emerge from ourselves in order to realize ourselves, to become another person in order to defeat death. To become people of the circus, the heroes of fiction, to put all the colours on our face. We cannot defeat death with the life they oblige us to live' (*Kyklos*, p. 44).

²⁷ Joyce mocks the heroic whereas Cervantes's satire used the heroic to mock contemporary life.

²⁸ Filippou's visit to a circus and his transformation from a spectator to an actor, actually a clown who is disdained and ridiculed by the audience, reinforces the narrator's philosophical meditations about modern man and his destiny is a distant echo of Bloom's plight in the 'Circe' episode.

²⁹ *Odysseas Choris Ithaki* (1957) and *Odysseas* (1974).

³⁰ 'There are no longer pirates on the Ocean, only idealist rebels who soliloquize in their loneliness finding salvation in their imagination. This is their Odyssey. [...] Imaginary journeys for hours on a multicolored geographical map [...]' (*Kyklos*, p. 57).

³¹ See also Eliade, 'The Terror of History' in *The Myth of Eternal Return*, pp. 141-154.

3.3. *Odysseas* (1974)

Xefloudas's first attempt at a modern transposition of the Odysseus myth appears with *Odysseas Choris Ithaki*, in 1957. Lacking characters and plot, the novel thematizes the means of its own creation and anticipates *Odysseas* (written in 1965-7 and published in 1974). The main character and soliloquizing persona bears the name of Odysseus and in an attempt to assimilate and thematize Joyce's legacy, he presents himself as the everyday modern man:

My name is Odysseus. I could be called Plato or Alexander. Names are totally irrelevant to what we really are or are not. Anyway it is very irritating for someone to have a known name. I see that you have started looking at me strangely. As if I were a personage from a novel whose name you read in the first or in the last page; [...] I am, therefore a man who could inhabit any place on earth, even Ithaca, luckily I am a human being and I add, because this might interest you, that it has not been long since I came back from the war, from any war. Yet, Ithaca may be an imaginary non-existent island that we dream of, and the journey of return the spectacle and the knowledge of the world. [...].

(*Odysseas Choris Ithaki*, p. 8-9)

The entire book deals with the thoughts of the first-person narrator, Odysseus, who allegedly converses with an anonymous and silent interlocutor. Odysseus's whole past life, his personal and family history, is narrated through his reveries and memories.³² He is an ordinary man, a poor teacher of mathematics who has also studied philosophy and has a touch of the artist about him. All these characteristics are possibly allusions to Stephen's artistic persona, also a teacher and embryonic philosopher. Odysseus shares the nightmare of history with Stephen. He is haunted by war memories which are generalized as the overall condition of man's fall into exile from his own self. The causes of war are traced back to the original sin and to the union between a man and a woman 'in a magic garden'

³² His father was an actor 'with a glorious career' in comedy, (p. 12). This may be an allusion to Joyce but also to Shakespeare, whose *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Julius Caesar* are often mentioned and quoted in Xefloudas's *Odysseas*. His mother was a typical housewife, condemned to loneliness and silence (p. 13).

(p. 32). Thus the book interlaces the motif of wandering with the myth of eternal return. As Odysseus says:

I was wandering around the familiar streets seeking to find the track of my life cut off by the war, to continue what I called inner odyssey [...]. I think, my dear sir, that the story of our lives is an odyssey without an Ithaca, a journey on our planet which ends on the day of our death. [...] I am a human [...] an Odysseus, I would say without an Ithaca, not through an inclination for escape but through a need for change and quest. (*Odysseas Choris Ithaki*, pp.75-76)

Xefloudas's transposition of the Odyssey as the inner adventure and destiny of a modern individual entwined with the motif of exile and the myth of eternal return are the shared grounds of his *Odysseas Choris Ithaki* and *Odysseas*. Their basic difference lies in the fact that in the former the Odysseus-everyman has all the characteristics of the contemporary individual, while in the latter the mythical persona himself comes to experience modernity.

Odysseas is written in Xefloudas's mature period and after the publication of his critical work where he displays his ideas about modernism and Joyce.³³ In *Odysseas*, he attempts a modern transposition of the Homeric myth which aspires to assimilate *U* through the subversion of myth, the inner adventure entangled with the wandering traveller archetype, and the use of the body as a metaphor for otherness and desire in language. By coming into modernity, this Odysseus disavows his royal identity and his heroic past in the name of everyday experience in the life of the modern individual. Calypso accompanies Odysseus on this journey. She has denied her divinity and leads Odysseus toward an earthly humanity governed by the world of the senses.

The wandering starts at Alexandria. Odysseus and Calypso walk on the seashore, return to their hotel and the next morning get on a train to Cairo, where they walk around the streets. People and events unfold before their eyes like cinematic images, leaving them untouched. They return to Alexandria, from where they embark upon a boat and continue

³³ *To Synchrono Mythistorema* was published in 1955 and *Odysseas* was written between the years 1965-7.

the journey by sea. The only extra topographical information we get from this journey is given when the ship sails by the island of Crete, and Odysseus goes through a long phantasmagoric dramatization of the Ariadne and Theseus myth in his imagination.³⁴ Finally, the ship arrives in the harbour of an unnamed city. Odysseus and Calypso disembark and continue their wandering in the city which stands for 'any modern city' (*Odysseas*, p. 205).

The dazzling lights of the advertisements, the hubbub in the streets, the size of the buildings and their identical shape, and in general the picture of a modern metropolitan city suffocate them. They visit a modern science lab; they go into a court where, in a fiasco of a trial, the scientist, inventor of the atomic bomb, is to be judged. Odysseus, who gives an antimilitarist speech, is kicked out of the court room, and the parody of the trial goes on, ignoring the crimes of modern science and of political power. Odysseus and Calypso continue their journey in the squalor of the city, among men intoxicated by alcohol and drugs, prostitutes, and women whose faces have turned into masks of maquillage. Eventually, like Filippos in *Kyklos*, they arrive at a circus, Xefloudas's allegorical place for modern man's condition. Modern man is compared to an acrobat, to a clown, to a buffoon, a jester trapped in the ludicrous performance of the circus which stands for life itself. Odysseus identifies himself with them: he is the buffoon of the theatre of history, a fool led astray by political power and militarism. In fact, we are told, he is nothing but a 'war criminal' (*Odysseas*, p. 231), suffering from guilt for his crimes. Odysseus and Calypso are the spectators of a world lost in the noise and the rush of its superficial life, as the circus scene suggests.

Having denounced their past, royal, mythic, divine, and along with it the kind of history which focuses on man's extroverted action, heroic deeds and war adventures, Odysseus and

³⁴ This section, (*Odysseas*, pp. 97-147), 'the story of horror and fantasy' (*Odysseas*, p. 148) in Odysseus's words, bears certain similarities with Dante's *Inferno* notably concerning the bestial appearance and behaviour of King Minos (Canto V) and Theseus's descent to the Labyrinth which recalls Dante's descent to the frightful and horrid circles of Hell.

Calypso maintain a subversive role against myth and history. However, as they themselves are a living myth, the suggestion is that myth itself is in exile in modernity. Xefloudas dismisses the historic and heroic deeds associated with myth. Conversely, he endorses myth as modern man's consolation, the linchpin which holds together universal values and imagination at odds with the cruelty of prosaic and mechanized life. Heroism is condemned as a war crime and adventure is validated as an inward journey to selfhood. Myth, as an imaginary refuge or a literary recreation, is the paradise missing from modern man's civilized life. The subversion of the Homeric myth also attributes an anti-heroic universality to the wandering traveller archetype. However, there is an essential difference in the way the two authors employ this archetype. Joyce's characters live in a specific time and place and are the reincarnations of a mythic past, as Joyce's humorous theory of metempsychosis suggests. In contrast, Xefloudas's characters wander about a generalized modernity and converse with their own past.

However, Xefloudas's Odysseus shares with Bloom his adventurous wandering in the city, his egalitarianism and sensuality. He also shares the estrangement of both Stephen and Bloom, the former being the artist and the young sceptic questioning all traditional thought and values, the latter being the wandering Jew who does not fit into his country. Joyce's characters merge in the presentation of this modern Odysseus, written almost forty-five years after *U*. Odysseus is a living myth that travels through centuries and experiences the existential anguish of the modern condition. It is this reworking of the Homeric myth which, infiltrated by Joyce's transposition, leads to Xefloudas's existentialist character.³⁵

Xefloudas assimilates Joyce's treatment of exile through the theme of the hero as an outcast, a theme which appears in the works of all three Greek authors discussed in this thesis. In his first works, in the thirties, the theme of the outcast hero was linked with the adventure of the would-be artist. But with Odysseus or his Odysseus-like heroes, the theme

³⁵ In *Odysseas Choris Ithaki*, Odysseus says: 'I know what you will tell me, that I am an old-fashioned existentialist. I

was expanded to consider modern man's condition as an endless Odyssey of the inner self. The questing voyager motif interlaces the theme of exile with the myth of eternal return, of the nostalgia for 'the myth of eternal repetition and in the last analysis, for the abolition of time'.³⁶ While mythic heroism is dismissed as a military brutality, the alienated modern man yearns for a prehistoric past of innocence and primitivism where desire and sensuality, the body, governs the world. In the beginning of his trip Odysseus says:

I am in Alexandria. *Day, hour, time do not interest me.* I cannot even give a specific answer, if someone asks me, why I am in this big city with the great historic name. [...] I might not go anywhere, I might go everywhere, the Odyssey will go on and on.

At this moment the sun has almost set in the Mediterranean Sea. Calypso and I, 'mute, holding hands', descend the [...] stairs of the insignificant hotel that we are staying in, in order to conceal my royal identity, my glorious past, my immortality. When I was a king I often had illusions and hallucinations. *This is the reason for my return amongst people; I imagine that I will reveal on earth the paradise of happiness.* [...] In Ithaca I left the contour of my body, the circle of my face, my external self. Because I had the feeling that my departure was without return. [...] Now I am wandering on the roads of the earth and the sea with Calypso, carrying with me whatever I saw and encountered. [...] *My road begins where all others end. That is why the desire for return to Ithaca is a myth that goes on and on.* (My emphases, *Odysseas*, pp. 7, 8, 9)

U is also saturated by the yearning for return to a primordial paradise, the Promised Land, which recurs in Bloom's thought amalgamated with his desire for Molly. It is the Homeric text which provides the way out from this quest in Bloom's return to Penelope's bed, the affirmation of the carnal end of his journey. This is also Xefloudas's viewpoint. His Odysseus's entire journey is directed toward the recovery of his sensational body, a return to the primitive sexual life of man, an Eden of instinctual life, represented in Calypso's character. At the same time, the recurrent motif of repetition in history and life which occupies Bloom's thought and contradicts itself through the desire for newness also exists

accept that' (p. 76).

³⁶ Eliade, *The Myth of Eternal Return*, p. 153.

in Xefloudas.³⁷ The contradictory convergence of repetition and renewal of his *Odyseas* harks back to *U*'s polyphonic legacy and to the themes of exile and of the hero as an outcast as represented in Stephen and Bloom respectively. Calypso, the temptress, motivates modern man's quest for self-exploration and for the recovery of his sensual body.

3.3.a. The Body and the Aesthetics of Desire

All for a woman, home and houses [...] His brain yielded. Perfume of embraces all him assailed. With hungered flesh obscurely, he mutely craved to adore (*U*, 8: 634-5-9).

Like *U*, *Odyseas* is an ironic undoing of the Homeric text. Odysseus is a modern man in psychological crisis. Haunted by history and myth, he confronts a hostile modernity in which he is an outsider with no hope of rehabilitation. His journey to selfhood encompasses both the dismissal of the heroic past through an undoing of the Odyssean myth and the experience of life in its physicality and sensuality. Calypso uses her body to entice Odysseus into his personal and aesthetic voyage. For this Odysseus is an artist himself, an author of his own story, who embarks upon a regressive journey through history and literature as well as his personal psychohistory. As he says, Calypso has always been ahead him, activating his senses and feelings (p. 195), giving him a second life (p. 197). Guided by Calypso's eroticism he wants to rewrite his story and through this rewriting to recreate himself in the present.

Odyseas's narrative is primarily developed through the main character's continuous monologue. The text is replete with allusions which emerge through Odysseus's soliloquy to support the exegetic tactics of Xefloudas's novel. Xefloudas alerts us to the multi-

³⁷ 'The year returns. History repeats itself.[...] Life love voyage round your own little world'(*U*, 13 :1093-5), says Bloom in the evening scene of the Sandymount Strand. And a short time later he contradicts his own words: 'No. Returning not the same. Like kids your second visit to a house. The new I want. Nothing new under the sun' (*U*, 13:

perspectival dimension of subjectivity by making his Odysseus a modern wanderer in quest of both aesthetic emancipation and sensuality. His Odysseus takes after both the *homme moyen sensuel* Bloom and the embryonic artist-philosopher Stephen.³⁸ Being the author of his own story, Odysseus turns to the psychic aspect of writing as the trace of dialogue of one self with the other, Calypso and literary tradition standing for this otherness. [Odysseus says:]

Everybody that circulates around me tonight in these roads has within his body, as I have, another or many other selves and looks far beyond the limits of the world, while the world begins and ends within ourselves. (*Odysseas*, p. 63)

Heterogeneity in the narrative and multiplicity of personality are Joycean characteristics which find echo in Xefloudas's main character, who is an artist himself and aware of the various cultural voices and personages haunting him.³⁹ In fact, Xefloudas's Odysseus is fully aware of his narrative role. This is a significant narratorial difference from *U*, where Joyce's self-consciousness about the medium of narrative is set against the character's relative lack of awareness. In contrast, Xefloudas's Odysseus embarks upon a solipsistic, self-absorbed, regressive journey to dismantle his historical and personal psychohistory. The heterogeneous voices of his past mingle with various domains of philosophy, existentialism, and Freudian psychology and reverberate through his mind.

Odysseas reflects Xefloudas's assessment of *U*'s impact on the modern novel: 'it is now obvious that introspection, the exploration of the psyche, the substantiation of the body, the immediate presentation of things cannot be excluded from the novel'.⁴⁰ His Odysseus says: 'We spoke the language of the body, the most real and immediate of all speech' (p.181).

1103-5), only to conclude 'think you are escaping and run into yourself. Longest way round is the shortest way home' (*U*, 13:1110).

³⁸ In *To Synchrono Mythistorema*, Xefloudas considers Stephen and Bloom as the twin disguises of Joyce. Stephen is a romantic ideal and Bloom the man in his bare and comic human impotence (p. 63).

³⁹ The multiplicity of personality is expressed in Stephen's theory of the androgynous artist: 'every man is many days, day after day. We walk through ourselves, meeting robbers, ghosts, giants, old men young men, wives, widows, brothers-in love. But always meeting ourselves' (*U*, 9:1044-7). Bloom says 'See ourselves as others see us' (13:1058).

⁴⁰ *To Synchrono Mythistorema*, p. 60.

Desire in language and the body guide Odysseus's journey to selfhood and aesthetic emancipation. The theme of erotic union recurs in every single chapter of the book and, in an almost obsessive way, points to a regression to a pre-human Edenic state of pleasure.⁴¹

Calypso, his partner on his journey into modernity, stands as an archetypal figure of femininity. She holds the other end of the thread for unravelling the Homeric myth, according to which Calypso kept Odysseus imprisoned on her island for seven years (*Odyssey*, I-V). In Xefloudas's text the captive takes his mistress with him, and in fact Calypso guides him into the world of senses and feelings.⁴² Calypso is the paragon of sensuality and sexuality, the fleshy earth mother who gives life. She has abandoned Ogygia and her immortal destiny to live real, sensuous life. Therefore, her casting is another subversion of the Homeric text, which is quite close to Joyce's. Molly Bloom, Joyce's Penelope, also takes on the role of Calypso in the eponymous chapter, a chapter in which, as Ellmann puts it, 'the whole sensory world is mustered'.⁴³ Xefloudas also demystifies the divinity of the nymph Calypso by transforming her into a companion-traveller and a master metaphor for the body and otherness.

Bloom's Calypso/Penelope occupies his mind during the whole of his Odyssean day. Similarly, Xefloudas's Calypso controls his Odysseus with the power of her body throughout his wanderings.⁴⁴ She is the liberating force which leads him from the abstraction of his meditations to the concreteness of a bodily reality.⁴⁵ By bestowing a

⁴¹ As Odysseus says, 'Sometimes all find their mythic form, their virginal self' (*Odysseas*, p. 70), 'Eros is invincible, unreasonable, mysterious, the universal copulation which has gone on from the very first day, when the sun shed light on earth' (*Odysseas*, p. 63), and elsewhere, 'The only human deed may be when you place in a body the life which is encapsulated in the sperm' (*Odysseas*, p. 183).

⁴² Calypso is a refuge from Odysseus's devastating experience of the world, very much as Molly is for Bloom the sensory relief for his pains. Compare the following: 'Be near her ample bedwarmed flesh. Yes, yes' (*U*, 4:647-9) thinks Bloom; while Odysseus says: 'She is naked like Eve in paradise. Her warm body presses mine, I feel her flesh firm like an unripe fruit, curving like a bow chord, superfluous with desire' (*Odysseas*, p. 52).

⁴³ Ellmann, '*Ulysses*' on the Liffey, p. 32.

⁴⁴ As Ellmann observes, Joyce makes 'Calypso less deific than Penelope'. In *U* the nymph Calypso and the enchantress Circe are staged in sensual and/or sexual terms. 'In what sense might Molly be both the immortal nymph Calypso and the mortal Penelope? [...] He wrote to Miss Weaver, who had complained that the Penelope episode was posthuman, that he would accept this word so long as pre-human was added to it; as against Penelope, he intended the more human apparitions to be Calypso, Circe, Nausicaa, and others' ('*Ulysses*' on the Liffey p. 33-34).

⁴⁵ As Odysseus puts it: 'As long as I was king, I confronted life with cowardice. I was too terrified to push my sensations to the limits; to blindly obey my desires, to extend my instincts to their utter consequence. I counted my

sensual humanity upon Odysseus, Calypso also inspires his long journey to aesthetic emancipation, supporting the androgynous perspective of the artist-to-be.

Calypso incites Odysseus's erotic desire, which leads him to different stories and literary traditions. With the musicality of her voice, she instigates his wandering into different literary genres and epochs. Odysseus says that 'her speech like music composed of all sounds [...] filled the creations of my imagination' (p. 197). The stories of Cleopatra, Clytaemnestra, Chryseïs, Bryseïs, Ariadne, and Pasiphae literally haunt Odysseus's mind. Calypso's character is conflated with all other females of Odysseus's imagination, e.g. 'I talk about Ariadne and it is as if I talk about Calypso' (p. 111), says Odysseus. To revive the words which have died and are like 'a corpse embalmed' (p. 248), Odysseus turns to the reactivation of his senses for the recovery of this primordial musicality of the body which has become desiccated in a mechanized modernity. To assume a voice of his own, to undo and redo all literature and history, he has to delve into his senses. Odysseus's journey has a twofold dimension: one concerns his regression into the literary past which he wants to recreate, and the other his submergence into the body's senses to reactivate its lost musicality. The body becomes a master metaphor for the recovery of a lost humanity harking back to an age of innocence and primeval sexuality that relates to the other, which is coded feminine. It compels this regressive-progressive journey into history, literature and modernity, sustaining the polyphony of the text and the aesthetics of the androgynous artist.⁴⁶

acts with a sterile logic in total disagreement with myself. I lacked the boldness to bite at joy and lose my mind within the lust of the body, to try the forbidden, to live to the end the pleasures of life before senescence and death severed my way' (*Odysseas*, p. 17).

⁴⁶ On the polyphony of the novel and its relation to the body – sexuality and death – see Kristeva, 'Word, Dialogue,

3.3.b. Eternal Return and Renewal

Like Stephen, who ‘must move from the abstract to the concrete’, Odysseus starts his journey with an attempt at spatial concretization.⁴⁷ Xefloudas chooses Alexandria as the place of departure for his Odysseus’s journey. This concretization is inextricably associated with iterative phenomena in history and life. Alexandria is chosen because it is a ‘utopia’ (p. 69). Saturated by historical, mythic and literary memories, it is the place of recurrence and repetition in history and literature.⁴⁸ Being on the crossroad of this vast tradition, it provides the initiatives which sustain the psychological *durée* and *devenir* in this modern Odyssean adventure.⁴⁹ As Odysseus conflates all the wars of history with the Trojan War, history, myth and literature meet each other, and are intertwined in Odysseus’s psychological continuum.⁵⁰

The idea of repetition is recurrent in *Odysseas*; history repeats itself, life reproduces itself, one story mingles with another, and myth mingles with history. Being in Alexandria, Odysseus meditates on the story of Antony and Cleopatra. A whole chapter (pp. 58-76) deals with this story. Cleopatra, the symbol of beauty and sensuality, is compared to all dead queens from Helen to Clytemnestra, temptresses and seductresses with mythical dimensions. Odysseus himself is compared to Antony, Agamemnon and Aegisthus, all of them trapped by the enchantment of the female body, a lure uplifted to paradisiacal

Novel’, in *Desire in Language*, pp. 64-91.

⁴⁷ Ellmann, ‘Ulysses’ on the Liffey, p. 32.

⁴⁸ Alexandria, founded in 332-323 BC by Alexander the Great, is the city in which Egyptian, Hellenic, Roman, and Alexandrine traditions intersect. For a long period it was the Hellenic centre. Between the 1830s and 1950s, it was populated by a considerable number of Greeks who worked and prospered there both economically and culturally.

⁴⁹ Xefloudas’s inner adventure is strongly influenced by Bergson’s notion of duration, *durée*, the time that is experienced by consciousness, according to which we do not experience the world moment by moment but rather in a continuous mode; time cannot be separated into past, present and future. Only the present is ever present to experience and counts for man’s *devenir*. Bergson’s influence is obvious not only in the use of time in human consciousness, but also in matters of mechanization of life; e.g. the circus scenes and the marionette mimicking gesticulations are all allusions to Bergson’s famous study on laughter, *Le rire*, p. 101. Also a strong biological force motivates the inward adventure, being very close to Bergson’s *élan vital*. See Bergson, *The Creative Mind* (Secaucus, N. J.: Citadel Press, 1946).

⁵⁰ Troy, Carthage, the battle of Actium (31 BC), Guernica, Hiroshima, Dachau, Auschwitz and Vietnam are all

pleasure. On board, the myth of Theseus and Ariadne provides another parallel to Odysseus and Calypso, while at the end of the book all this blending of personages is subsumed in Adam and Eve, suggesting the return to a lost paradise.

Trying to write his Odysseus in a modern idiom, Xefloudas draws from a vast European literary tradition, oriented toward English literature and Anglo-Saxon modernism. Joyce's *U* and Eliot's *The Waste Land* echo many times in his *Odysseus*.⁵¹ His attempt encompasses the Ulysses theme in the European tradition leading back to Dante and Shakespeare. Xefloudas's Odysseus has a touch of Dante's doomed hero who sets off on his travels to experience the world.⁵² Dante is subtly introduced through the holocaust scenes relating to war crimes (p. 207), and associated with the many references to Odysseus's descent to Hades, and Theseus's entrance into the labyrinth (pp. 97-147); all these allusions, associated with war, also harbour an apocalyptic perspective. Additionally, the theme of paradise is quite Dantean in the sense that as the poet is guided by Beatrice to *Paradiso*, Odysseus here is led by Calypso's sensual body to an earthly paradise, through sensuality, instinct and sexual pleasure.

The allusions to Shakespeare are more frequent and overt, linked with the theme of erotic desire, betrayal and the unleashed instincts of female sexual desire. Shakespeare's works, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Julius Caesar* (p. 59-60), and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (p. 95), are all mentioned in Odysseus's monologue.⁵³ The Shakespearean allusions derive primarily from the story of Antony and Cleopatra. The echo of Shakespeare is contextualized in a discourse which criticizes human relationships through literary texts. It is entwined with the Hamletian, Stephen-like despondency that Odysseus experiences throughout his inward

grouped together (*Odysseas*, p. 207).

⁵¹ See for instance Xefloudas's simile for Ithaca which he abandons: 'Ithaca, from the very first moment you abandoned it, was a waste land in your eyes', says Calypso in her monologue, (*Odysseas*, p. 19); also Troy, after its disaster, seems like 'waste land' (ibid, p. 38).

⁵² In Canto XXVI of *The Divine Comedy*.

⁵³ In his monologue, Odysseus cites the words of Cassius and Brutus in Act III, scene 1, of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, about the destiny of any Caesarian figure, who is to shed his blood for the sake of the masses. Yet there is no reference to Shakespeare's work; it is as if Odysseus quotes the verses from an unknown text.

adventure. This orientation, nonetheless, also points to Joyce, whose preoccupation with Shakespeare overshadows his Irish Ulysses. It is obvious that Xefloudas alerts us to his English-orientated Odysseus through the plethora of allusions to Shakespeare.

The European orientation of *Odysseus* also encompasses a vast literary legacy which includes Tennyson's 'Ulysses'.⁵⁴ There are also apparent traces of Kazantzakis's work, particularly from *Askitiki* and his *Odyssey*.⁵⁵ *Odysseas* also bears certain similarities to Greek modernist poets such as Ritsos and Seferis.⁵⁶ Cavafy's poetry also seems to be a significant intertextual source for Xefloudas.⁵⁷ In Cavafy's poetry, even before Joyce, the questing voyager motif is inextricably associated with the inward adventure and the transposition of myth in modernity.⁵⁸ The inward adventure and the everlasting journey themes which recur in Xefloudas's *Odysseas* echo Cavafy's poems 'Ithaka' (1911) and 'God Abandons Antony' (1910). 'Ithaka' focuses on the eternal journey with no destination, for the journey itself is the source of experience and self-recognition.⁵⁹

In Odysseus's endless monologue, history, myth and literary tradition repeat themselves, and actually conflate with each other. All are directed to a present of sensual pleasure where the body keeps the dominant role in a place of delights, 'a place in time that is cosmic, cyclical and infinite'.⁶⁰ Odysseus says,

⁵⁴ Tennyson's poem was composed in 1833 and published in 1842, under the obvious impact of Dante's *Inferno* (xxvi). Tennyson's Odysseus also abandons his throne 'to sail beyond the sunset' (60) like Xefloudas's Odysseus, who starts his wandering in the evening setting of Alexandria, and leaves his country to his son to go beyond 'the utmost bound of human thought' (31).

⁵⁵ In general Xefloudas's Odysseus has something of Kazantzakis's recalcitrant spirit as expressed in Calypso's words to Odysseus: 'You did not subdue yourself either to Gods or to people' (*Odysseas*, p. 19). However, Xefloudas's Odysseus hardly resembles Kazantzakis's 'extroverted' Odysseus, who undertakes action and goes on his heroic deeds with a Promethean spirit which is encountered neither in Joyce nor in Xefloudas. On Kazantzakis's character, similarities and differences with *U*, see W. B. Stanford, 'The Re-integrated Hero' in *The Ulysses Theme* (Oxford: Blackwell), pp. 211-240.

⁵⁶ In Ritsos's poetry we encounter mythological characters who speak in a modern idiom, e.g. in his poems 'To Nekro Spiti' (1959), 'Kato ap' ton Iskio tou Vounou' (1962) 'Orestis' (1966). G. Ritsos, *Tetarti Diastasi*, 4th ed (Athens: Kedros, 1972). Also in Teucer's monologue in Seferis's 'Eleni'. G. Seferis, *Poiimata*, 9th edn (Athens: Ikaros, 1974), pp. 239-241.

⁵⁷ C. P. Cavafy (1863-1933) was the first Greek poet to use myth and history in his poetry in an immediate association with the condition of his time. Cavafy was a sceptic who rejected and harshly criticized traditional Christian values, patriotism and heterosexuality, and transposed myth and history in his contemporary condition in his poetry. Xefloudas's choice of Alexandria may be an act of homage to Cavafy as it was the latter's homeland.

⁵⁸ Unfortunately, we have no information as to whether Joyce had any familiarity with this poet's work.

⁵⁹ C.P. Cavafy, *Collected Poems*, trans. by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard, (London: Chatto & Windus, 1990), pp. 29-30.

⁶⁰ Eliade, *The Myth of Eternal Return*, p. 153.

Repetition for us is always a beginning. It is not a habit, the algebraic formula plus times minus equals zero, something mechanical, cerebral, naked, of an unknown content. In each repetition we discover another person inside ourselves, our body becomes the bridge which carries us to the ulterior point of our inner world. We learn what we are. We conquer our naked truth. (*Odysseas*, p. 52)⁶¹

As he meditates on the story of Antony and Cleopatra, Odysseus parallels himself to Antony, the leader who abandoned his country for the sake of a woman.⁶² The Shakespearean allusions mingle with echoes of Cavafy's poem, 'God Abandons Antony'. Like Antony in Cavafy's poem, Odysseus is ready to leave Alexandria.⁶³ Homer's voice blends with Shakespeare's and Cavafy's, and in this polyphonic assembly history repeats itself.

Incorporating a vast tradition, Odysseus has come into modernity through the successive recurrence of mythic, historic and literary legacies which reverberate in his mind. And indeed, Xefloudas's 'everyman' is haunted by the memories of a resourceful past and in such a way that no doubt remains that, in his literary journey, he resembles more the intellectual personality of the dispossessed Stephen than the naïve materiality of Bloom. However, in the journey toward the world of senses and otherness for the recovery of the lost musicality of the body, Xefloudas's Odysseus parallels Bloom's sensuality and ambivalent masculinity. The sensual body becomes the locus of all recurrence, where myth and history but also aesthetic rapture converge, submerge, die and are resurrected to revive

⁶¹ Repetition and recurrence, a familiar Joycean elaboration deriving from Vico's cyclical theory, predominate in the text to impute an unhistorical, mythical dimension to it but also to sustain its poetic bias, musicality and rhythm associated with the body. See Giovanni Battista Vico (1668-1744), *The New Science*, trans. by Thomas Goddard Bergin and Max Harold Fish, 3rd edn (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1968).

⁶² 'I think again of Antony, maybe because he also rejected posthumous fame for a woman, as I did. He expected that with the starting of the day he would see Cleopatra's ship in the midst of the sea. Nothing appeared. Suffocated by his bitterness, he could not understand who he was or what he did. Blinded by his passion, he chased after love and death. Unable to become the man he used to be, to find the strength to be alone, to put on his armour once more, to fight to return to Rome where his people might await him, as my people awaited me in Ithaca, even my faithful dogs...' (*Odysseas*, p. 84).

⁶³ 'God Abandons Antony'.

At midnight, when suddenly you hear/ an invisible procession going by/ with exquisite music, voices / don't mourn your luck that's failing now,/ work gone wrong, your plans/ all proving deceptive- don't mourn them uselessly: as one long prepared, and full of courage,/ say goodbye to her, to Alexandria who is leaving [...]' (Cavafy, p. 27). Compare that to Odysseus's words: 'Tonight I will say goodbye to Alexandria who is leaving' (*Odysseas*, p. 62).

and recreate the self.⁶⁴ In this sense, and despite the sensual primitivism and lyricism, more reminiscent of D. H. Lawrence than Joyce, this Odysseus writes his own everydayness with the language of desire immersed in the sensual body of woman.⁶⁵ The woman's body and voice, assimilated and appropriated within the narrative, together with the ingestion of a vast literary tradition, sustain the polyphony of the text. The iterative return to archaic or old texts, the unbinding of their texture, and the appropriating of feminine desire lead to a newborn polyphonic text. Its polyphonic voice encompasses a blending of genres, identities and ideas. Catharsis comes through an iterative thematization of erotic union and autoeroticism relating to the sensual and desiring instinctual body. Thus the intricate undoing-redoing, degeneration-regeneration processes which we discussed in Stephen's act of creation also occur in Xefloudas, yet without Joyce's exploitation of the physiology of the body. Instead, Xefloudas employs the body as a metaphor for otherness and desire. Through a lyrical thematization of the instinctual body in artistic creativity, he turns the text into an explanatory commentary on the aesthetics of desire and of the androgynous artist.

3.3.c. The aesthetics of the androgynous artist

In his journey toward selfhood and aesthetic emancipation, Odysseus declares the activation of the world of the senses as a necessary precondition for recovering his humanity, as the only way out from the mechanization of modern man's life. His subversion comprises the return to a more primitive, pre-historic or pre-human age of innocence, where sexuality is not judged by ethics and social convention.⁶⁶ This unconventionality inhabits those margins of society which reject political, military, religious and matrimonial power, and endorse

⁶⁴ As Odysseus says, 'we believe that in each repetition we will find and we will make ours whatever we seek' (*Odysseas*, p. 64).

⁶⁵ Odysseus is obsessed with the sensual and devouring bodies of Cleopatra, Clytaemnestra, Chryseis, Ariadne, all of them converging in Calypso, who rejected her divinity for the sake of mortal sensuality.

⁶⁶ See Eliade: that 'archaic world knows nothing of profane activities: every act which has a definite meaning-hunting, fishing, agriculture; games, conflicts, sexuality,- in some way participates in the sacred' (*The Myth of Eternal Return*,

desire as the most essential part of their subversion.⁶⁷ Calypso, the woman *par excellence*, occupies this space of subversion in Xefloudas's text.

In his conflation of Calypso's character with other historical or mythical women, Odysseus almost obsessively highlights one single theme: the lustful womb, either craving and devouring as in the cases of Cleopatra, Helen and Clytemnestra, or relieving and Edenic as in that of Ariadne and Calypso.⁶⁸ Odysseus turns to woman as saviour, creator of life and the enchantress who can destroy the male enthralled by her lures. She is both heaven and hell. Masculine eroticism is provoked through a voyeuristic game of projective empathy toward feminine desire, as the description of Ariadne's passion suggests:

As confirmed by the indiscreet or rather the voyeuristic courtiers, she often stood in front of mirrors and looked at her naked body; [...] her hands, pleading for countless desires, reached out to embrace the visions of her sensuality. Other times she would approach the bulls painted in a state of orgasm on the walls [...]; she touched them with her fingers, she stroked them, she drew her palms across their bodies, her desires attained uncontrollable intensity, she shuddered to her core, and with thirsty flesh gave them life, the bulls, rose up onto their two hind legs, widened their nostrils, snorted; their bellies rose and fell, their tails whipped the air; they jumped upon her with an untamable erotic lunge. (*Odysseas*, p. 98)⁶⁹

As Odysseus's sight focuses on all those moments of erotic excitation, the text vibrates in a ceaseless state of unfulfilled sexual desire, which recurs and repeats itself from one chapter to another. Nonetheless this Odysseus experiences his sexuality through voyeurism, autoeroticism and identification with the other sex.⁷⁰ There is a double-edged game

pp. 27-8).

⁶⁷ On the political, social and religious character of this subversion see Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*. On the impact of this subversion in the novel and the importance of the body see Kristeva's psycholinguistic reworking of the aforementioned theories for the polyphonic novel, particularly 'Menippean discourse: the text as social activity' and 'The subversive novel' in *Desire in Language*, pp. 82-85 and 85-90.

⁶⁸ Cleopatra captured Caesar and Antony with her body (*Odysseas*, p. 59), Clytemnestra entrapped Agamemnon and Aegisthos in her voluptuous and devouring womb also destroying her son Orestes (*Odysseas*, p. 64). Ariadne, who is identified with Calypso, 'felt herself become transformed under the immense desire of her body. In the fathoms of her womb, something like flaming lava was flowing toward her vagina' (*Odysseas*, p. 111).

⁶⁹ The representation of Ariadne's passion appears to be a dramatization of the frescoes in Knossos, the paintings which represent the dance with the bulls in the rites of the Minoan civilization.

⁷⁰ In Odysseus's fantasies Calypso is also an imaginary projection: 'Calypso always walked ahead of me. I followed her without resistance because I understood that she wanted to show me her island, as she had done with her body, for me to feel it mine, in my eyes, to step on the whole of it with the soles of my feet, to touch each point of it, to identify

concerning the desire for and of a woman. Calypso's voice and perspective are not genuine, but are a man's perspective of how a woman feels and speaks. Many times in his monologue, Odysseus says about Calypso's voice: 'she speaks to me as if she were talking to herself' (p. 53). It is through Calypso that Odysseus recovers his genuine voice, the voice of his body (p. 181).⁷¹

Xefloudas evokes the woman's allegedly insatiable desire to express his Odysseus's unfulfilled and autoerotic passion. Consider Odysseus's perspective on Calypso:

Calypso re-finds herself. Nobody is around but us, the water, the night, the huge moon that unclothes her. *She speaks to me as if she were speaking to herself*. On my island whose dimensions I measured with my eyes, I wandered from seashore to seashore while you, far from me, were preparing the ship of return. [...] My feet sank into the wet sand, the burning sun penetrated my flesh, upsetting me to the womb. My breasts swelled and I sought for your body to spill your vehement river into mine. I was your hostage in life and death. I uttered inarticulate cries as animals do in the period of fertility [...]. (My emphasis, *Odysseas*, pp. 18-19)⁷²

Such a naïve and repetitive description of erotic passion points to a thematization of eroticism and the body itself, verified also by Odysseus's words: 'Whatever we have seen becomes our body, vision, touch, hearing, our world and dies with us' (p. 62). The iterative theorization in the book seems to follow the repetitiveness and the recurrence of the erotic excitation, which is never sublimated, in contrast to Joyce, where the comical outbursts and the language games lead to a cathartic relief.

Nonetheless, this thematization of the body reflects upon the narrative. The only narrative voice other than Odysseus is Calypso, whose voice breaks and disrupts his monologue. However, their monologues intermingle and fuse in such a way that their voices become almost indistinguishable. This idiosyncratic rendition of a woman's voice through a

with it' (*Odysseas*, p. 195).

⁷¹ Calypso has always been ahead of him as he claims, but also after him: 'Calypso and my shadow follow me always' (*Odysseas*, p. 218). 'I have wandered for centuries and I still believe that I am naked, the eternal first-created man' (*Odysseas*, p. 226). 'If Calypso were not with me I would believe that I was the last person on earth' (*Odysseas*, p. 235).

⁷² The metaphors of the sea and the river sustain the cosmic dimension of this union which harks back to exemplary

man's monologue suggests an ambivalent duplicity in Odysseus's character. Odysseus's all-absorbing solipsistic ego is split into two narrative voices to suggest the androgynous character of the act of creation. Although not overtly advocating the Joycean aesthetics of the androgynous artist, Xefloudas subtly introduces the theme through Odysseus's appropriation of Calypso's voice. He does not discuss the gender problem with the multi-perspectival dimension of Joyce, but Calypso shares the pacifistic, rebellious and anti-heroic characteristics of Odysseus. She is an alleged wanderer herself and a liberated woman who shared her bed with gods and now has decided to make her own erotic choice.⁷³ Thus Odysseus and Calypso reciprocally seek in each other the alterity, or what Freudian metapsychology would call *l'autre*, the other which confirms and complements their individuality.⁷⁴ However, as Calypso's voice is always enfolded in Odysseus's monologue, she is but an erotic *imago*, an imaginary fictional projection which is conflated with all other females in the male's affirmative endeavour. In this sense she lacks the multi-dimensional perspective of femininity of Molly's character. She shares with her the active erotic fantasies and passion which affirm the male's virility in the final 'yes'.

Desire and the body appear to sustain language and style in the text. Odysseus turns to Calypso's love, voice and body to recover the forgotten musicality of language and to write his own story.⁷⁵

Calypso expressed her love for me with a thousand mouths, with innumerable voices [...]. I felt as if I was living a second time, finding myself in another world [...] I had the sensation that we were the first people at the beginning of the world. I saw Calypso's face, her eyes and her body in their

models of cosmogonic myths, the fecundating water of the rain, or the river or the sea as primordial mother.

⁷³ Calypso has been chosen for her active and sincere erotic passion which breaks with the passive role of femininity. In *Odyssseas Choris Ithaki*, his Odysseus explained his preference for Calypso: 'Woman waits pathetically for love just as the earth the rain. I do not know whether Calypso was an exception or an example of sincerity. Her thirsty body with the round flanks and the big breasts satisfied her desire like an animal on heat' (p. 87).

⁷⁴ This is also a recurrent motif encountered in all three Greek authors in this thesis, associated with gender unsettlement, style and language, involved with new Freudianism and psycholinguistics, Cheimonas being the most characteristic case in point.

⁷⁵ Odysseus is a would-be artist. He claims authoritatively to be the writer of his own story, a story, though, which breaks with the tradition of 'a novel with plot, beginning, end, linear development' (*Odyssseas*, p. 191).

transformations, [...] I heard her speech like music composed of all sounds, the night filled with the creations of my imagination and I etched my nameless road on the bright sea. (*Odysseas*, p. 197)

In a retrospective locating of Kristeva's theories in Xefloudas's text, we would say that Calypso's voice stands for 'these semiotic operations (rhythm, intonation) and their dependence vis-à-vis the body's drives observable through muscular contractions and the libidinal cathexis that accompany vocalizations'.⁷⁶ One has to recall Calypso's passion resembling animals in the period of fertility or her 'inarticulate cries' (p. 19). Also there is a subtle but distinguishable alteration in style whenever feminine eroticism intrudes in the text. It imbues the discourse with poetic diction and breaks through Odysseus's mournful monotony.⁷⁷

Odysseus evokes Calypso as a feminine otherness to articulate his own voice. 'I want to ask Calypso what we are waiting for, or what we still seek, but I know very well that she will not answer me. *Words have died. Each word is like a corpse embalmed*' (my emphasis p. 248). The necessity for the revitalization of language and the word recurs in Odysseus's monologue. Consider the following:

The name I bear has no epoch or homeland. I may take it every day and it may be different without me ceasing to be the wily Odysseus. Each time, I give it its meaning, I create its story, I create it so that it can exist in both the today as in the yesterday. Otherwise every name is nothing but a label [...] to classify us to recognize us by and to call us as if we were nothing other than that. (*Odysseas*, p. 175)

Also Calypso, in her 'dead' name, embodies the hidden or forgotten Epicurean delights concealed in its etymological root *Kalypto* (cover). However, as her mythic role is subverted, so the meaning of her name is overturned through the revelation of the sensual body. To articulate his voice, Odysseus had to encompass this feminine otherness, comprised of paradise and hell, desire and terror, but most of all sensuality. Similarly,

⁷⁶ Kristeva, *Desire in Language* pp. 134, 136.

⁷⁷ Odysseus himself says: 'I am afraid that I am writing about people and facts that have no contemporary interest, at a time when the threat of a universal disaster weighs on every life, [...]' (*Odysseas*, p. 103).

Odysseus, the tormented (as the verb *Odysasthai*, meaning the one who is pursued by gods and men, suggests), goes on his eternal journey. And, as all his wanderings suggest in this everlasting journey, he recovers selfhood and the real meaning of language and life in Calypso. Calypso's body evokes the oceanic feeling in Odysseus's psyche and leads him to catharsis:

Laid on the warm sand, Calypso, naked as if born out of the water, did not notice my presence. Her body was like a big conch washed up by the waves on the seashore. A full moon, if I recall well, had fixed its sight upon her nudity and revealed the upright breasts, lying on her back, her abdomen was hardly curved, her fine thighs the perfect bodily plasticity. The sea was shining motionless at full length. *I had the sense that I had arrived in a place where everything is a midsummer night's dream.*

(My emphasis, *Odysseas*, p. 175)

Calypso's dream-like body relieves Odysseus from his plight and drives him to a state of relaxation, functioning as a symbol of Nirvana.⁷⁸ Desire retrieves those primordial erotic impulses, which hark back to fantasies for an embryonic symbiosis with the mother in the womb, as Odysseus also says: 'I find myself beside the sea. I was born near the water and to this I will return, as if my destiny was bound up with it (p. 18). This is not only an allusion to Stephen's words '*omnis caro ad te veniet*', but also a thematization of Stephen's view of the sea as a 'womb-tomb', sweet mother. Submerging in this body, which is imbued with the musicality of the waves, Odysseus's artistic voice aspires to become newborn logos combined with rhythm and musicality. However, the exegetic tactics of the novel undermine musicality and poetic rhythm. One good example is Xefloudas's dramatization of Cavafy's 'Ithaka'. His Odysseus says:

I came here in order to make an aimless trip, a marvellous trip for the trip itself or because of an internal need to change environment despite the fact that I know the world is the same everywhere,

⁷⁸ This casting of Calypso is reminiscent of Pascoli's 'Ultimo Viaggio' (1904) where Odysseus's trip has also a retrospective character and is directed toward Calypso's 'isola lontana' (Calypso XXIV). Calypso hides Odysseus's body in the cloud of her hair and takes him into the infinite. Giovanni Pascoli, *Convivial Poems*, ed. and trans. by Egidio Lunardi and Robert Nugent (Painesville Ohio: Lake Erie College Press, 1979), pp. 149-152.

that there is no difference between people, they are laden with the same values, malice and deficiencies without exception. (*Odysseas*, p. 34)⁷⁹

Elsewhere he says, 'if I want to leave, I have nowhere to go. There is no ship, there is no road' (p. 66). His words are a direct allusion to Cavafy's famous verses:

this city will always pursue you / [...] there's no ship for you, there's no road./ Now that you've wasted your life here, in this small corner, you've destroyed it everywhere in the world.⁸⁰

Odysseus's words are essentially a rewriting in prose of Cavafy's lyrics. One can read Cavafy's poetry in Xefloudas's text but it has turned into a prosaic commentary or into discordant music.

In Xefloudas's work, the thematization of aesthetic consciousness and the theorization of the means of creation undermine the representative character of the novel. Trapped by a most analytical, essay-like discourse, language oscillates between the rationale of normative *Logos* and the instinctual vibrations of desire which aim at musicality.⁸¹ The critical discourse of an essay, deliberately self-referential, seems to sweep away all other styles. The plethoric explicitness counteracts the allegories, symbolism is neutralized owing to the author's excessive preoccupation with the thematization of aesthetic consciousness. Revealing a semi-philosophical, semi-analytical propensity, which is dramatized through emotional outbursts, the text advertises its experimental and ironic subversion, the ambition to be the novel that includes everything, the Joycean 'all in all'. The implantation of critical

⁷⁹ As you set out for Ithaka/ hope your road is a long one, / full of adventure, full of discovery. / Laistrygonians, Cyclops, / angry Poseidon - don't be afraid of them:/ you'll never find things like that on your way / as long as you keep your thoughts raised high, / as long as a rare excitement / stirs your spirit and your body. / Laistrygonians, Cyclops, / wild Poseidon - you won't encounter them/ *unless you bring them along inside your soul, / unless your soul sets them in front of you.* / Hope your road is a long one. [...] Keep Ithaka always in your mind. / Arriving there is what you're destined for. But don't hurry the journey at all. / Better if it lasts for years, / so you're old by the time you reach the island, / wealthy with all you've gained on the way, not expecting Ithaka to make you rich. *Ithaka gave you the marvellous journey.* / Without her you wouldn't have set out. / She has nothing left to give you now. / And if you find her poor, Ithaka won't have fooled you. / *Wise as you will have become, so full of experience, / you'll have understood by then what these Ithakas mean.* (My emphases) Trans. by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard, in *C. P. Cavafy, Collected Poems* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1990), pp. 29-30. (Ithaka instead of Ithaca, is the spelling used by the English translators).

⁸⁰ Cavafy, 'The city', *Collected Poems*, p. 22.

⁸¹ This musicality derives from Calypso's presence, or in terms of Kristeva's neo-Freudianism, from the semiotic activity of the body relating to the (m)-other which intrudes in the symbolic order of Logos, pertaining to the father. *Desire in Language*, p. 136.

discourse into the literary text sustains the novel's exegetic proclivities and the polyphony of the amalgamation of genres. In this sense, Xefloudas attempts to imitate Joyce's play on style and language, and his implantation of scientific, philosophical and other discourses into a literary text. His failure rests with the fact that he undermines literature itself in an attempt to show his intertextual origins.

The closure of the book recapitulates the whole text, in a sort of a *ricorso* which summarizes Odysseus's adventures. Nothing has changed in the life of this Odysseus, nothing has happened, just as nothing much changed in the life of the characters of *U*. In his own style Odysseus explicitly conveys this Joycean message which highlights the importance of the body.

The day goes by at the same monotonous pace. [...] Everything which existed exists; [...] The present is interwoven with the past and the past with the present and they go on into the future. [...] Life was always a comedy and a tragedy in order for us to transform ourselves. The world, beneath its surface, remains the same as I left it while I still bear my glory and fame in the streets. [...] Only in this way do I exist. This is my Ithaca which I never abandoned. The rest is a fantastic story. What is the purpose after all, to be or not to be, to have a name or not to have a name? *My body, my face my knowledge, my adventures, my wanderings, my world are the body.* (My emphasis, *Odysseas*, p. 255-6)

Odysseus does not leave the last word to his Calypso as Joyce did with Molly. However, he leaves her with the final voyeuristic viewpoint, in an ironic reversal of his own voyeuristic interplay with textual and sexual matters.

The sun is suffocated by smoke. I want to be optimistic but I cannot; to be a rebel, but revolution has become the generals' own property, inept, without laws, a negator without faith, free of barriers, I am but a unit of this world which is paranoid in its impasses. Calypso continues to laugh at me ironically [...]. (*Odysseas*, p. 256)

Xefloudas turns an ironic eye to his own creation. In a final self-referential gesticulation his Odysseus is mocked and ridiculed by the feminine projection of himself who puts in question his whole endeavour. Calypso's ironic look and smile, epitomizing the ironic

undoing, raise the everlasting moment of ambiguity maintained in the text through its entire allegoric journey.

3.4. Conclusion

Xefloudas's work, in line with the modernist trend of his time, aspired to create a novel focused on the inward process of its making and the inner self of man. Deriving more from the symbolist legacy than the naturalist, Xefloudas broke with the nineteenth-century European novel, and turned toward the 'introverted' novel by foregrounding the inward adventure as modern man's destiny. His work, which encompasses a vast domain of literary works initially deriving from French literature, expands towards the English legacy. Associated with the philosophical and analytical thought of his time, particularly psychology and existentialism, Xefloudas's enterprise employs a wide range of his contemporary thought in the rendition of his modern Odysseus.

With his *Odysseas*, Xefloudas seems to turn more to Anglo-Saxon modernism and to Joyce's *U*. In his aspiration to write an *Odyssey* in the light of Joyce's legacy, Xefloudas employs the questing voyager archetype and the myth of eternal return to disclose the inward adventure of the modern individual. The anti-heroic and ironic subversion of the Homeric comprises the questioning of the whole literary tradition along with the gender stereotypes of the last century. The transposition of the mythic figure of Calypso as eternal woman, masculine projection and alter ego, sustains Xefloudas's subversion of the Homeric text. Although without Joyce's temperament of the androgynous-voiced artist, the author brings to the fore the heterogeneity of gender, calling upon those instinctual impulses which hark back to the most innocent and primitive voices of the body.

Xefloudas's attempt at writing his *Odyssey* in a modern idiom is undermined by his bias towards the thematization of aesthetic consciousness and of the means of novel-making.

The writing of *Odysseas* in the form of an endless monologue harks back to Xefloudas's early work and particularly to his preoccupation with interior monologue, which he only managed to thematize in his texts. Although poor in style and narrative techniques, the text is rich in intertextual resources. These different cultural voices reverberate in Odysseus's monologue and constitute the polyphonic character of the text, albeit not on the scale of *U*. The polyphonic and dialogic character of *Odysseas* is set in motion through the employment of the body as a metaphor sustaining the aesthetics of the androgynous artist, desire in language and sexuality. Without the acuteness of a comical undoing but with the bitterness and the despondency of an ironic and sarcastic dismantling of the literary legacy, Xefloudas turns to the body as the only source of genuine creativity, of the surging up of the self's inner powers, of its gender otherness and primordial sensuality. The polyphony, the intertextual loans and allusions along with a two-gendered voice, lead to a text close to Joyce's work, conspicuously displaying the affinity between textual and sexual matter. Xefloudas's *Odysseas* is an important text for the history of Greek modernism and indicative of the reception of *U* in Greece.

CHAPTER FOUR

Chapter Four: Nikos Gavriil Pentzikis (1908-1993)

4.1. Introduction

A central figure of the Salonica school, Pentzikis is the one Greek author whose work essentially corresponds with Joyce's, encompassing many elements of *U*'s transposition of the epic to modern man's adventure in everyday life. Critics have discussed Pentzikis's relationship with Joyce's work on the basis of the techniques of introspection in the novel, the palimpsestic character of his writing, and his use of language.¹ His art is characterized by experimentation and an openness both to European tradition and to divergent theoretical fields. It also endeavours to bring together Eastern and Western legacies through the blending of the ancient Greek and the Orthodox Christian Byzantine worlds with contemporary European thought.

This chapter focuses on the shared intertextual grounds of the two authors and their paradigmatic use of the body in the text. It explores Pentzikis's indebtedness to *U* in terms of aesthetics, comedy, and the use of myth and language, as demonstrated in *To Mythistorema tis Kyrias Ersis*.² Pentzikis associated his name with Joyce's from the early thirties, when he translated an excerpt from Edouard Dujardin's *Les lauriers sont coupés* under the pseudonym Stavrakios Kosmas.³ He also partook in the group translations of *U* in the journal *Kochlias* in 1946. The experimental character of his work and his dramatization

¹ For the techniques of introspection see G. Aragis, 'N. G. Pentzikis' in *Mesopolemiki Pezografia*, 8 vols (Athens: Sokolis, 1996), VII, pp. 46-77. For the palimpsestic character of his writing, see P. Moullas, 'O Palimpsistos Kodikas tou Pentziki' in *Palimpsista ke mi* (Athens: Stigmi, 1992), pp. 165-199. Almost all of Pentzikis's critics compare his language games with Joyce's, although vaguely. See Aragis (1996), Moullas (1992), Aristinos (1981), G. Thaniel (1983), P. Charis (1963), and N. Lazaris (1984).

² Cited as *Kyria Ersi*; Drosinis's *Ersi* will be cited as *D's Ersi*. G. Drosinis, *Ersi*, 2nd edn (Athens: I. N. Sideris, 1922).

³ Published in the journal *To Trito Mati*, 1 (1935), 25-27.

of the means of novel-making, inextricably linked with the formation of identity and the body's functions, associate Pentzikis's work with modernism.

The thematization of the novel-making processes appears already in his two first novels, *Andreas Dimakoudis* (1935) and *O Pethamenos ke i Anastasi* (1944). His first novel, resembling a typical *Bildungsroman* of a 'romantic character', deals with Andreas Dimakoudis's unrequited love for Renée Saeger.⁴ Frustrated and rejected, the protagonist is led to write out of desire.⁵ Eventually the central character commits suicide, after hiding himself in a basket of flowers offered to his beloved. His disguise as a plant anticipates the chain of metamorphoses to follow in Pentzikis's work, decked out with pagan and Christian elements.

O Pethamenos ke i Anastasi takes up where *Andreas Dimakoudis* left off. The novel has as its main theme the process of its own making. It ignores the linear narration and verisimilitude still maintained by the Athenian branch of the Generation of the Thirties.⁶ Instead, it focuses on the exploration of man's inner space and on experimentation with artistic creation as a salutary process in the life of the individual. In *O Pethamenos ke i Anastasi*, a young man without a name commits suicide and is figuratively resurrected through the writing of the book into a world of words and forms derived from Greek tradition. Both Andreas Dimakoudis and the suicidal young man reappear and are partially identified with the narrator-artist and protagonist of *Kyria Ersi* in a conflation of identities sustained by the death-rebirth motif. This continuity of identity is also backed up with biographical information, thus transforming these novels into a portrait of an artist in

⁴ Thaniel claims that *Andreas Dimakoudis* continues the legacy of romanticism, resembling Rousseau's *Confessions* and Goethe's *Sorrows of Young Werther* see G. Thaniel, *Homage to Byzantium, The Life and Work of Nikos Gabriel Pentzikis* (Minneapolis: North Central Publishing Company, 1983), p. 9.

⁵ He cuts his finger with his razor to write down in his own blood his love for Renée, an early anticipation of Ersi's bleeding and the writing of the text with her blood in *Kyria Ersi*. The action is set against a backdrop of Andreas's psychosomatic anxiety and linguistic meditation, dramatizing his feelings and the act of writing. See *Andreas Dimakoudis, ke Alles Martiries Chamou ke Deferis Panoplias* (Salonica: ASE, 1977), pp. 46-47.

⁶ A case in point is Theotokas's *Argo*, 2 vols (Athens: 1933-6; Athens: Estia, 1988).

several volumes.⁷ This parallels Joyce in that three major novels form an aesthetic quest with an unbroken thematic development.⁸

Pentzikis views artistic creation from a twofold perspective: Freudian and Christian. The former recognizes a therapeutic role in literature and the latter the salutary force of the exercise of the soul in the novitiate of a monk (ascesis).⁹ He manifests an inexhaustible ability to amalgamate various and even contrasting theories with his religious perspective, thereby emulating Joyce's synthetic ability. One characteristic example is his blending of the Freudian incest motif with the dogma of the Trinity, as cardinal in his art as it is in Joyce's:¹⁰

In my work, ever deepening recollections in the space of memory take place, beyond the dream and the facts of psychoanalysis. In a space where the other substitutes for the ego. (In fact, Rimbaud, a pre-surrealist poet, in one of his letters, said: 'je est un autre'). At the very moment that life begins to resemble death and death life, there, where the origins of myth have always been, [...] is this unique way out from sadness and stress. [...] European literature with the evolution of symbolism, showed the triviality of great love on earth. [...] See how easily the child says 'mama I will marry you when dad dies'. There are no limits; because neither the child nor the father are separate people. They are continuity. The symbolism, then, which managed to symbolize the relationship between church and man as a relationship between a woman and a man, finally sublimates the child as a salutary symbol. The 'New-born Child' and 'the God announced centuries ago' [...]. (*Iperekheilisi Idaton*, pp. 206-208)

⁷ Andreas Dimakoudis, *O Pethamenos ke i Anastasi* and *Kyrias Ersi* are part of a continuous aesthetic quest. In an interview with Fostieris and Niarchos, Pentzikis said: 'Dimakoudis was almost an autobiography and the hero of the book was I'. In 'Mia synomilia tou N. G. Pentziki me ton Antoni Fostieri ke ton Thanasi Niarcho', *Lexi*, 22 (1983), 135-139 (p. 135).

⁸ Thaniel characterizes the sequential progress among these three novels as 'a work-in-progress', a suggestion that relates Pentzikis's work to Joyce's. John Fletcher and Malcolm Bradbury also claim that 'each of Joyce's three major works - *A Portrait* (1916), *U* (1922), and *FW* (1939) - is implicitly a redefinition of the work before it, and each constitutes part of a continuous aesthetic quest', p. 405. 'The Introverted Novel', in *Modernism*, pp. 394-415.

⁹ In *O Pethamenos ke i Anastasi* 3rd edn (Salonica: G. Kromida; Athens: Agra, 1987), p. 21, he writes: '“In the final analysis what is the use of literature?” Isn't it in fact a sickly consequence of the times, an outlet of boredom, a passion unknown to great ages, when expression flowed effortlessly from action? With the help of this or that ideology we keep searching for stimulants to our feelings, which we value too much and are afraid to forsake'. Also in an interview in 1978, entitled 'Pote den tha Gino Logotechnis' he states that through his writing he escaped madness, *Diavazo* 11 (1978), reprinted in *Iperekheilisi Idaton* (Salonica: Paratiritis, 1990), pp. 192-210 (p. 208).

¹⁰ Pentzikis associates Joyce's work with Freud's discoveries about the processes of the inner self. See his meditations on artistic subjectivity and myth cited in the first chapter of the thesis, section 1.3. 'The Body in the Text', which are quoted from *Pros Ekklesiasmo*, pp. 10-11.

In Pentzikis's work exploration and experimentation are intertwined with his attempt to bring together the Byzantine and European traditions in a form of modernism. The difficulties raised by his multidimensional work can be compared to Joyce's without making Pentzikis a Greek Joyce. Pentzikis's sources are vast and complicated, and he amalgamates them with his own perspective. Mysticism and religiosity blend with experimentation and the scientific spirit of a physician or a physiologist artist. All these elements bring Pentzikis close to Joyce while increasing the gap between the former's commitment to Christian tradition and the latter's anti-theology. Pentzikis refers to this paradox as follows:

My writing is not surrealistic, although influenced by surrealism. Most, of all, I can say that I was influenced by the Byzantine Emperor Ioannis Kantakouzinus's *History*, which he wrote when he became a monk in Vatopedion and took the name Joasaf. In his *History* I find many analogies of style and structure with Joyce's work. With Joyce the questioning of concepts is brought about via satire, whereas Kantkouzinus disputes them via self-ridicule within his own *History*; that is why he is a great author and emperor.¹¹

Pentzikis's attraction to Symbolism, Surrealism, Modernism and to the ideas of Freud and Jung arises from a deep disrespect for everything rational as destructive of belief and intuition.¹² His heterogeneous theoretical background is deployed in his mockery of the literary legacy in *Kyria Ersi*, an updating of Drosinis's Parnassian romance. Just as Joyce did with the epic, Pentzikis uses D's *Ersi* as a scaffold for writing an Odyssey of artistic creation in modernity. As Seferis puts it:

The help he [Pentzikis] assumes from the former academician [Drosinis] rests upon this: N. G.

Pentzikis is in need of a skeleton, a scaffold, a framework which would somehow prevent his writing

¹¹ In 'Mia synomilia tou N. G. Pentziki me ton Antoni Fostieri ke ton Thanasi Niarcho', *Lexi*, 22 (1983) p. 136. See also *Omilimata* (Athens: I Ekdoseis ton Filon, 1972), p. 10.

¹² 'Reason dissects and dissolves myth, bequeaths unbelief, reduces existence to zero, ruins form. [...] We salute the dead, while we do not believe in the reality of their shadows. It is only through this salutation that they assume identity', in 'Gia ton Mallarmé', *Kochlias*, 18 (1947), 84-94 (p. 84). The translation is taken from Thaniel's text, p. 87.

from evaporating. Whether that is a common event of everyday life which was reported in newspapers, or the memory chest, or Drosinis's *Ersi*.¹³

Pentzikis's narrator - who coexists and interacts with the protagonists of Drosinis's novel which he knows from his youthful readings embarks upon a long Odyssean quest into literature and art to rewrite Ersi's story in a modernist context. *U* is a key-text for understanding the remaking of D's romance and exemplifies the whole of Pentzikis's modernist enterprise.

4.2. *To Mythistorema tis Kyrias Ersis* (1966)

4.2.a. Drosinis's *Ersi*

Kyria Ersi reflects the subversion of the conventional structure of the novel in the thirties, as discussed in the first chapter. Although published in 1966, it bears anew all the basic elements of this quest. Centering its plot on artistic creation, it is an Odyssey of style, form and language. Pentzikis chooses Drosinis's last novel *Ersi* (1922) as the basis of his ironic undoing of a whole literary legacy and for his construction of a modernist parable of art.

G. Drosinis was a Parnassian poet belonging to the so-called 'generation of the 1880s'.¹⁴

A member of the Greek Academy of Letters and the scion of a wealthy family, Drosinis becomes the object of sarcastic irony for the narrating persona of Pentzikis's *Kyria Ersi*.

The Parnassians were advocates of plastic beauty and insisted upon formal perfection. They

¹³ G. Seferis, *I Ores tis Kyrias Ersis*, an essay published under the pseudonym Ignatis Trelos, (Athens: Ermis, 1987), pp. 34-5. Seferis agrees that D's *Ersi* has very few features in common with Pentzikis's rewriting but has served as a scaffold supporting the fluidity of his thought and language. And it is true that Pentzikis, as Joyce does with the Homeric text, takes some details of D's *Ersi* and transforms them into a radical metaphor for art-making in modernity.

¹⁴ The generation of the 1880s turned against the pomposity, the rhetoric, the sentimentality and the pseudo-heroic of the last period of romanticism. See Linos Politis, *Istoria tis Neoellinikis Logotechnias* (Athens: Morfotiko Idrima Ethnikis Trapezis, 1989), p. 187.

located such beauty and perfection firmly in antiquity.¹⁵ The spirit of antiquarian erudition is essential in D's *Ersi*, in which Ersi is an amiable young lady married to the archaeologist Pavlos Rodanos. The couple's first meeting is in the Acropolis Museum. Rodanos's research for his aesthetic treatise on the female hand and leg in ancient Greek sculpture brings the couple to an unnamed island for six months. The visible aloofness in the couple's life is in contrast with the practical life of the natives, fishermen or peasants. In his novel, Pentzikis picks up this aloofness to attack Parnassian perfectionism and D's vague realism and along with it the legacy of the realist novel.

In D's romance, characters and marital life are idealized. Ersi is distinguished not only by her beauty, but also by the intellectuality she shares with her husband. Together they read D'Annunzio, Shelley and Byron (D's *Ersi*, p. 20). Ersi also helps Pavlos in his work by copying forms of statues for his research, and she becomes his librarian (D's *Ersi*, p. 25). If Rodanos is an archaeologist searching for the ideality of ancient art, his wife Ersi is a living representation of ideal beauty. Ersi's beauty is compared to Greek statues like the Victory of Samothrace, the goddesses Athena and Demeter, and to Persephone. Her name has an archaic echo, since Ersi (Herse), also meaning 'dew', was the name of one of the three daughters of the first King of ancient Athens, Cecrops. The reader, who is familiar with Joyce's 'Nausicaa', can easily recognize the similarities between Ersi and Joyce's heroine Gerty of the 'Nausicaa' chapter. The descriptions of her beauty, accessories, fantasies, and feminine properties recall Joyce's presentation of his heroine, a parody of Gerty Flint, the protagonist of Maria Cummin's (1827-66) sentimental novel *The Lamplighter* (1854), to whom the 'Nausicaa' chapter of *U* owes a considerable, if ironic, debt.¹⁶ While reading 'Nausicaa', Pentzikis must have recognized a lot of similarities in Joyce's parodic description of this heroine and D's *Ersi*.

¹⁵ Robert D. Denomné, *The French Parnassian Poets* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press; London and Amsterdam: Feffer and Simons, 1972), pp. 1-38.

¹⁶ See *U* (13: 634), and *UA*, p. 384.

Ersi has a touch of the artist about her. In this sense, she is comparable to Gerty, although Ersi has the intellectuality that Gerty lacks. Ersi is an educated woman, a member of the literati, sensitive and charming, entrapped in the traditional feminine role that patriarchal society ordains for women. Ersi also shares with Gerty a virginal purity suggested by allusions to the Virgin Mary. Ersi, although married, is comparable in chastity and modesty, in girlish innocence, playfulness and naiveté to Gerty. D's novel focused on the themes of aesthetic perfection based on the Parnassian idealization of love and matrimonial life out of which issues ideal art.

4.2.b. Pentzikis's *Kyria Ersi*

Pentzikis unravels and reweaves D's text in deep, though discreet, irony. The book is separated into three parts with the titles 'Mystery', 'Personal Narration' and 'Representation'. Each of the last two parts is subdivided into three chapters, the first one into four.

In Pentzikis's text, D's Ersi stands for the artistic ideal to be demystified. She is lowered to her human and corporeal level, as mother earth, eternal woman, flesh which becomes word-Logos. Pentzikis reverses D's ideal and static world by presenting the Rodanos couple in conjugal crisis. Their relationship is damaged by their intellectuality. Absorbed in the idealization of the world of form, they have lost touch with 'the immediacy which acts upon the senses' (p. 319). Thus the conjugal crisis militates against D's parochial aesthetics, which have failed to see under the surface of fact. Pentzikis highlights the corporeal aspects of marriage in order to create his own parable of art. He represents the union of a male with a female as source of all creativity, and artistic creativity as an imaginary copulation, taking place within one single body of the androgynous artist-son.

Instead of spending the summer holidays together, as in D's text, the two partners decide temporarily to separate. Mrs Ersi wanders along the coast of Chalkidice, in a coach full of strangers who eventually turn out to be people who have died and surge up as memories in her imagination. In her long and repetitive interior monologues, Ersi, like Molly, recalls her marital and personal life, her adolescence, and her early days of conjugal happiness. Similarly, Pavlos, who is very much the uxorious husband, although bored by his marital life, embarks upon his own quest which is no longer limited to archaeological discoveries but is expanded into a quest for recapturing his lost marital happiness. The narrator, a persona with Stephen's artistic temperament, follows their voyage into modernity, trying to reconstruct D's anachronistic perspective on their lives.

The first part, called 'Mystery' is an approximation of D's *Ersi*. It opens up the mystery of individual identity standing between concrete reality and a mythical or metaphysical imaginary world. In this first part, each one of the fictitious characters, including the artist-narrator, opens up his/her innermost thoughts either by interior monologue or in personal narration. Each one of them has embarked upon his own quest for 'lost happiness', a quest with notably Odyssean characteristics, rendered under the impact of Joyce's *U*.

In the second chapter of the first part, Pentzikis introduces a third character, a man named Ruit Horas. This man, as Pentzikis says, metaphorically stands for the foreign influences on Greece 'as well as the contemporary explorations in the Western world of the problem of time' (Thaniel, p. 55). Ruit Horas is a metaphor for the passing of time, or as Thaniel puts it, he is 'Mr Time (*ruit hora*, in Latin, means 'time rushes on'))' (p. 56). Ruit Horas is of a sinister and almost ghastly appearance. He has six fingers on his longer right hand, he is fat and old, and yet the narrator accepts him as one of his own people. With Ruit Horas, Pentzikis initiates metamorphosis into his text with the interchange of characters, roles and

the protean transformation of the body through time.¹⁷ Thus he turns Ruit Horas successively into Dimitris Mitropoulos (the late conductor of the New York Symphony Orchestra, predecessor of Leonard Bernstein), and one of Drosinis' personae, Mr. Kalliadis, an inspector of antiquities and an admirer of Ersi. In these successive roles, Ruit Horas's protean modality escorts Ersi on her travels by bus, which become a voyage through space and time. Ruit Horas also takes the narrator to the outside world of concrete reality.

The second part of the book, titled 'Personal Narration', deals with the narrator's adventures in the novel-remaking. After four years, the narrator goes on with his rewriting. During this time, he has tried to improve his erudition, by devoting himself to a treatise on the myth of Theseus and Ariadne. The ironic ambiance of the opening of this part is obvious, as this treatise harks back to Rodanos's antiquarian research. The narrator leaves behind his admiration for the Parnassian novel of Drosinis and initiates a subversion of literature and language. The whole thematic structure is developed through the device of Freudian dream-work, employed as the style for the writing of the new novel. The narrative unfolds through dreams, phantasmagoric metamorphoses and hallucinations. The rampant symbolism, the exploration and exploitation of trivia, and the interpretation of the dreams together bring a microscopic world of exhaustive details to the narrative.

In one of his dreams, the narrator conflates the ancient myth of Ariadne with the Greek folk-tale of the Sack-stitcher (Sakorafos) to produce a linguistic effect which foregrounds the constructive work of language as part of myth-making on the basis of sound. The focus on the similarity of sounds between the words 'myti' and 'mitos' marks the development of the whole story. In Greek 'myti' means nose and 'mitos' is the word for Ariadne's thread.¹⁸ As the narrator says, he had a dream that he 'was touching (έπαινα) and pulling (τραβουσα)

¹⁷ As Seferis observes, 'Mr Horas [...] has the properties of "Proteus" or of Apollonius Tyaneus (the latter, being a sorcerer, is also the sinister part of him)' (*I Ores tis Kyrias Ersis*, p. 39).

¹⁸ The novelist Yannis Skaribas, in *Mariabas* (1935), had already played on the similarity between 'mitos' and 'myti'. His protagonist writes *mytos* which is interpreted as an augmentative meaning 'big nose', instead of mitos meaning thread, in an attempt to imitate the bad spelling of a housemaid called Ariadne. See Yannis Skaribas, *Mariabas* (Chalkida: 1935; Athens: Nefeli, 1992), p. 19.

Mrs Ersi's nose' (p. 146). This insignificant and funny gesture becomes the nodal point of a chain of thematic sequences and metaphors. He associates 'the word 'myti' (nose) with the 'mitos' (thread) which Ariadne gave to Theseus' to save him from the labyrinth. Likewise, the narrator, touching and pulling the 'myti' (nose)-'mitos' (thread), finds a way out of his labyrinthine meditations through the rewriting of the novel. The pinching of the nose-thread becomes a master metaphor for the act of writing as embroidery and corporeality, as the narrator relates:

The importance of this event was so crucial for my soul that as I have already related, right from the very day of my return, associating the word 'myti' (nose) with the 'mito' (thread) which Ariadne gave to Theseus, and with which the ancient hero saved himself from the Labyrinth, killing the Minotaur, I was busy with the study of all those ancient myths, hiding from my very self that, what I wanted to say was, by citing various and divergent information, I touched Mrs Ersi's nose. But this is not the way that the dream starts. In the beginning I dreamt that I was the poor sack-stitcher of the folk tale. Do you know the tale? A king passes by the sack-stitcher's humble workshop and hears him singing: 'I clogged it myself! ... I clogged it myself! ...' He asks for explanation and the humble man tells him that he saw in a dream the reason for his own misfortune. That is, on arriving at a meadow where [...] the springs of everyman's fortune flowed, he saw that his own was dripping just like a tear. He said he went to unblock it so that it would flow better, but as he tried to poke it with a twig, a little stick got stuck inside and blocked the tap even more [...]. (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 146)

As the king takes the sack-stitcher to his palace, giving him happiness and royal wealth, the story shifts from the folk-tale to Michael Psellos's Byzantine history concerning the Emperor Constantine Monomachos (11th century), and from the sack-stitcher to the Emperor's jester, Voilas.¹⁹ In a carnivalesque ambiance the king's jester is put on mock

¹⁹ Monomachos in Greek means gladiator. The association with Psellos's history comes through another dream in which the narrator makes clear that his attraction to Constantine the Gladiator derives from the latter's paternal attitude toward his subjects, an attitude that the historian Psellos fails to see because 'he cannot see clearly beyond the psychological contradictions, the unity of the paternal role in the life of the person about whom he writes' (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 174). The narrator approves Theophanes's chronicle instead of Psellos's because the former, 'without forgetting that kings are human beings, always has before him the image of their paternal role' (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 174).

trial because of his love for the Emperor's wife, who in the narrator's dreams is conflated with Ersi.²⁰

In a dreamy phantasmagoria, where D's romance is conflated with Psellos's history, Pentzikis fabricates the relationship of the artist-narrator into a family romance with an incestuous bias. Ersi assumes all the possible female roles in Psellos's chronicle; she becomes Alani, the emperor's concubine, and his dead wife, Zoe. The narrator's desire for Ersi, the eternal woman, is restrained because of his filial love for the Emperor and his admiration for Pavlos, Ersi's husband. The narrator experiences a Hamletian despondency and ambiguity, oscillating between his desire for Ersi's maternal figure and his commitment to the paternal roles of Pavlos, Drosinis, the Emperor, and the king. Eventually, Pavlos dies and the union between the narrator and Ersi is facilitated. Hereafter, in the eyes of Ersi, the narrator himself takes on successively the role of Pavlos and the late Andreas Dimakoudis of Pentzikis's first novel. Emulating Stephen's theory of the androgynous artist, Pentzikis fashions his parable of art with an incestuous Oedipal drama which presents artistic creation as the offspring of an alleged family triangle, consubstantial as the shifting of roles suggests.

Pentzikis constructs his comedy on the basis of the metamorphoses of the body. At the very moment he touches Ersi's nose, the narrator feels the lower part of his body transformed into a malodorous plant, the 'fidochorto' (snake-plant, p. 218).²¹ In a semi-parodic, semi-serious staging of the Oedipus complex, Ersi announces to the narrator that her husband Pavlos has died, and that she accepts his proposal to wander around the places she lived with Pavlos in his company, and to help him to rewrite D's story. Thus the act of writing is linked with Oedipal desire, as Pavlos's death and his replacement by the narrator

²⁰ In this scene, which is possibly inspired by Bloom's adventures in the 'Circe' episode, Voilas performs like 'Karagiozis' (a popular figure of the Greek shadow theatre, something like a Greek Punch).

²¹ A plant of the Arum family, known in English as Dragon Arum, which has a tall spadix, a flowering stalk with a big fleshy stem, which, as the narrator says, flowers around the end of May and the beginning of June.

suggests.²² Ersi sets up an appointment with the narrator for the 11th of July 1951 (p. 226).²³

With this concrete definition of time, the narrative drifts from dream to reality. Hereafter, the narrator roams 'like a wandering Jew' (p. 154) (an overt allusion to Bloom) in the network of his thoughts, but also in the streets of Athens, where he is going to meet Ersi.

The third part of the book, titled 'Anaparastasi' (Representation), is a representation of the act of writing as the outcome of the union of a fictitious with a real character, namely of the female persona of Ersi with the male narrator. The corporeal aspects of this symbolic union sustain Pentzikis's master metaphor for art as the new-born Logos. The suggestion is also that the writer's identity is formed in a process of becoming through his art-making, which occurs in terms of the death-rebirth motif entangled with the questing voyager archetype.

Mrs Ersi came to me after her husband's death, not because the Athenian poet hadn't referred correctly to the events and facts of the happy vacation [...]. The representation of the past happiness which she wanted us to achieve did not have the revival of the past as its aim. She wanted to spin yarn from that material and taking up a needle to embroider, [...].

Continuing then *the narration of our trip toward the representation*, I will describe the handicraft of her patience. For this reason, besides, I was obliged to write *that I died and was metamorphosed out of my body into needle and thread. [...] The good work, an embroidered kerchief, the vessel of a second marriage in eternity with her husband, was accomplished. I will tell you how each thread was crossed and woven and knitted with the rest in the whole representation, since I was the needle as well as the thread*. If, however, the thread was cut at the end and the needle lost, I, *with my mortal nature*, cannot doubt what happened. At a certain moment, the pin-point of the glossy, *hard metal pierced the tender finger pushing the needle and the blood ran. The drops of blood are my faith*. Remember what the folk song says about the lover who one day kissed the desirable lips of his beloved? His own lips coloured. He took out his handkerchief to wipe them and it too was dyed red. He went to the river to wash it and the river was also dyed [...]. Similarly for me, the whole world was dyed by the drops of

²² We recall Pentzikis's preoccupation with the Oedipal complex, as stated in his interview, in 'Pote den tha Gino Logotechnis' in *Iperkheilisi Idaton*, p. 208.

²³ This recalls Joyce's setting of his own story on the day he met Nora Barnacle, the 16th of June.

the spilled blood when the finger was pricked by the needle [...]. (My emphases, *Kyria Ersi*, pp. 281-283)

Pentzikis establishes the corporeality and materiality of the act of writing with the motif of metamorphosis and by representing writing as shedding of blood and as embroidery. The former points to a bodily erotic communion which conveys desire as the fundamental precondition for the act of writing, lowering Christian *agape* to its corporeal counterpart. As for the latter, embroidery as traditional feminine handiwork endorses the writing subject's polymorphous identity and casts his voice as the equivalent of a twin of the opposite sex, coded feminine and portrayed in Mrs Ersi's female character. This contrivance echoes Joyce's androgynous artist giving way to Molly's voice.

In a section entitled 'The wound and its consequences' (pp. 338-342), Pentzikis exploits the physiology of hearing to parallel the passing of his narrator's voice through Ersi's tympanum with the piercing of her finger by the narrator transformed into a needle. The voice penetrates Ersi's tympanum and this symbolic wound is portrayed in her facial expression of 'pain but also pleasure' (p. 339). The wound paralyses her hand, the needle subsequently pierces her finger and the shedding of blood begins. The description of the physiological process of the sound's reception by the ear celebrates sound as the fecund force which propagates Logos. The play on words on the basis of their sound, which is the foundation of punning, foregrounds the import of the ear and of the sense of hearing as a means of impregnation out of which Logos is born. There is here a latent theological allusion to conception through the ear - a heretical doctrine relating to Arius. The whole scene suggests a sexual communion of the narrator with Mrs Ersi, who at this stage has already assumed the role of the Virgin Mary, in order for the Immaculate Conception to be brought about. The narrator brings into the scene the mute child from D's novel which was found abandoned on the island of Ersi's holiday with her husband and adopted by the couple. Mrs Ersi's affections for the mute child in Pentzikis's text take on an incestuous

character. In what is possibly a dramatization of the Freudian concepts of Eros and Thanatos, the mute child, who symbolizes death, penetrates Ersi's abdomen.²⁴

The whole mute child entered into Mrs Ersi. I saw her putting aside her embroidery which was covering her abdomen and lap like an apron. She was trying to make space in her flesh. She was heard to say: 'Virgin Mary, I made space for you, you can fit, step, come upon my belly'. (*Kyria Ersi*, pp. 341-342)

Pentzikis essentially closes his parable of art with Mrs Ersi's impregnation by sound and by the procreation of Logos via the grotesque union of the narrator's reified body with Ersi's flesh and blood. The suggestion also encompasses the rendition of the artist-son as androgynous, double, ambiguous and heterogeneous.

The following (third) chapter of the third part of the book is a long interior monologue without inverted commas, entitled 'When the moon fell asleep'. This section of the book recalls Molly's monologue, as the speaking voice of the narrator, who, lying next to his wife in bed, recapitulates the events of the book. It is a nocturnal monologue celebrating the matrimonial thalamus. The narrator is now married, and his wife takes the place of Mrs Ersi. Their four children are Pavlos Rodanos, Andreas Dimakoudis, the author Stavrakios Kosmas - an early pseudonym of Pentzikis - and the needle and the thread.²⁵ The narrator discloses his polymorphous identity by taking all possible positions within the narrative: artist-son, and procreator father/mother of his own work, represented in the four children. The book's closure is Joycean in the sense that it endorses conjugal love, as expressed in Molly's final 'yes'. However, in Pentzikis's allegory for artistic creation, marital status becomes the source of creativity, the precondition and the talisman for excoriating perversion, and fantasies of the unconscious.

²⁴ See, for example, Pentzikis's reworking of Freudian Eros and Thanatos through his association of swimming with marriage and of marriage with life and death (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 205).

²⁵ Pentzikis used a pseudonym after the rejection of his early writings, published in Salonican newspapers after his return to Salonica in 1929, and his studies in Strasburg. The pseudonym itself was an allusion to the Byzantine and religious character of his work, as Thaniel relates: 'Stavrakios (stavros = cross) sounds like a monk's name, while Kosmas is the name of a Greek saint, unless we want to read in it Pentzikis's concern with the world (cosmos = world)' (*Homage to Byzantium*, p. 9). This early pseudonym marks the Byzantine propensity in Pentzikis's work, albeit with a secular perspective.

4.3 PENTZIKIS'S *KYRIA ERSI* IN THE LIGHT OF JOYCE'S *U*

4.3.a. The General Impact

Kyria Ersi echoes Joyce's modernist transposition of the epic. The allusions to *U* are so many that whereas *Kyria Ersi* in its manifest content is the remaking of a Parnassian romance, in its latency it hides the properties of an epic concerning the act of writing, which becomes an Odyssean quest of the inner self for identity and otherness. This subversion explores the act of creation within the tripartite formula of humour, scientific discovery and aesthetic rapture, as in Joyce's modern epic discussed in the second chapter of this thesis. Pentzikis acknowledges his debt by direct allusions to 'Proteus', 'Nausicaa' and 'Circe', while the aesthetic theory of 'Scylla and Charybdis' permeates his narrative.

The book opens with an explicit allusion to *U*, since the first chapter of the first part has the title 'Wandering' and the subtitle 'Monologos Para Thin' Alos' (Monologue on the sea shore).²⁶ Pentzikis elicits from 'Proteus' the ever-changing modalities of God as the means of sustaining his penchant for forms, which, turned in upon themselves, disclose the inner processes of his novel-making and the personal ordeal of the act of writing. In an amalgamation of the pagan and Christian worlds, the protean archetype and the Homeric myth are revisited, infiltrated by the Joycean text. 'Nausicaa' is a satire on feminine romance yet, viewed in association with the Penelope episode, it sustains the quest toward an otherness coded feminine, involving identity and language. Assimilating more than alluding, Pentzikis subtly introduces the thematic motifs of the 'Nausicaa' episode from which he extracts Joyce's subversive debunking of Cummin's sentimental novel to employ

²⁶ Pentzikis's first translation of a long extract from 'Proteus' was published under the title 'Stephen Para Thin' Alos', ('Stephen on the seashore' in *Kochlias*). The phrase 'para thin' alos' is a quotation from the *Iliad*, referring to Achilles's despondency on the seashore, books I.350 and XIX.40. See Homer, *Iliad*, trans by A. T. Murray, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press and William Heineman, 1924, repr. 1971).

it in his own undoing of the Parnassian text. All the motifs of Mariolatry and the lonely virgin derive from *U*, although Pentzikis misleadingly hints at them through references to the Homeric text rather than the Joycean. He bases his undoing of D's *Ersi* on the human component of the dogma of the Trinity and its mortal aspect. The death-rebirth motif and the dream (as a state of withdrawal and repose out of which the artist arises anew) constitute the conductive line of transmutation of the textual matter. Eventually the new text is written with Ersi's blood so that this transmutation blends with the theological concept of transubstantiation. In this sense, Pentzikis also draws upon Stephen's aesthetics of the androgynous artist. The grotesque corporeality of his comedy echoes the Circean phantasmagoria whose world is exploited by Pentzikis through dream and metamorphosis.

Pentzikis shares with Joyce a holarchic aesthetic model, imbued with mysticism and scientific spirit, and employed loosely in the treatment of his material through the Pythagorean theory of numbers.²⁷ He also shares the thematization of the means of novel-making, the use of myth in modernity, the experimentation with various modernist and avant-garde techniques, notably dream-work and metamorphosis, the subversive bias of a comedy aiming at reversing the literary past and language conventions, and the paradigmatic exploitation of the body sustaining the copulative basis of art.

²⁷ This theoretical elaboration, decked out with Orthodox and neoplatonic ideas, relates the universe to a numerological system. It is a mixture of cosmology, philosophy and religion that interprets universal phenomena in terms of mathematical symmetry. Pythagorean numerology holds that the universe is not only expressed in terms of numbers but is itself number. This theory sanctions the authority of the number one, The One, as the source of everything passed into Christian writers through Neoplatonism. Pentzikis's cartography of numbers rests on a mystical and supernatural world, the world of God. For example, the number one is the condensed whole of all phenomena which derives from the marriage of the void with love, love being the Christ himself who wedded heaven with Hades. One then is death restored to life after receiving the gift of love. Number two is the cross. Three is the Holy Trinity. Four is The Holy Trinity with the addition of the terrestrial element, which is an implicit allusion to the Virgin Mary as the fourth participant in the Holy union. See Pentzikis, *Archeion* (Athens: I Ekdoseis ton Filon, 1974), p. 109.

4.3.b. The Aesthetic Consciousness: Pentzikis's Holarchy and the Transcendence of Realism

In Pentzikis's *Kyria Ersi*, the novel-making techniques are part of the story and reveal a conscious project. The author alerts us to his constant experimentation with style, narrative devices and language.²⁸ Obviously, the organization of his material lacks the Joycean order. However, the free association employed in his text and the randomness of his personae's inner thoughts are based on a deliberate aesthetic choice that reflects the language of the unconscious and the dream. Pentzikis gives us an account of this sort of organization underlying *Kyria Ersi*:

I started describing the dreams in my work and gradually I managed to experience life as a dream. I was not exactly writing down my dreams but I was exploiting them as material, constructing them in my own way. I have read a lot of [...] Freud's studies on the dream and Artemidorus's *Dream-book*, which Freud kept under his pillow [...]. I believe in dreams and in their symbolic meaning. [...] Scientifically it has been proved that every night we dream about 483 images. That is the reason why I wrote *To Mythistorema tis Kyrias Ersis*, in 483 pages, which follows the sequence of the dream association. I utilize the same mode of perception in my painting. I have noticed the way that the coffee-readers express themselves. My painting essentially resembles the order of the small grains in the coffee cup. Because I analyze the small particles which constitute the concepts and the words, that is to say the letters, by means of numerology.²⁹

This philosophical-theological rationale of wholeness underlies the theory of numbers, the fundamental game which Pentzikis employs in the word-play and metaphors which strategically sustain his narrative from a mathematical and scientific, or pseudo-scientific, perspective.³⁰

²⁸ See, for example, the explanatory comment, in the third chapter of the first part of *Kyria Ersi* that the first chapters are but the thoughts of a persona expressed via interior monologue.

²⁹ See 'Mia synomilia tou N. G. Pentziki me ton Antoni Fostieri ke ton Thanasi Niarcho', p. 137.

³⁰ See, for example, Pentzikis's approximation of human consciousness: 'How must our collective consciousness be [...]? Not a solid marble body as in statues but a suspension like oil which will mix with water in infinitesimal spheres. The internal analogy in the climax of the microcosm, of the suspension of the stellar bodies of macrocosm, of the universe. [...]' (*Iperekheilisi Idaton* p. 29).

Kyria Ersi is actually the only book of Pentzikis that has a conscious patterning, as manifested in its tripartite organization, alluding to the doctrine of the Trinity.³¹ This frame of reference permeates Pentzikis's religious comedy and brings him close to Joyce's jocoserious playfulness around the same issue. Yet Pentzikis's holarchy is subordinate to the concept of the oneness of God, triadic, dispersed and scattered in life at large.³² This semi-philosophical, semi-scientific and largely theological perspective pervades Pentzikis's holarchic viewpoint, which sustains his dissections of life in its infinitesimal parts, and overlaps with Joyce-Stephen's 'vivisection spirit' of modernity (*SH*, p. 190). To focus this, note how Pentzikis's narrator perceives reality.

The artist-narrator is a curious collector of all sorts of information deriving from literature, history, the natural environment and everyday life, in which flora occupies a central role. Pentzikis employs his botanic education to construct an allegory for the human body and its vegetative functions, the microcosmic and macrocosmic relationship of the part with the whole.

Gathering therefore the plants last year, I saw merely the leaves, the twigs, the flowers, but at the same time I was also recalling the designs of the varying interior texture of their filaments as they appear under the microscope. This knowledge, many times manifesting interesting forms of life to me, mostly contributed to a confusion of the senses which happened to me as I was collecting the flowers [...]. That is, as I was collecting the flowers, I started little by little to pick not only those which smelled. I was losing the natural macroscopic ability of choice [...]. (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 197-8)

³¹ In the light of Pentzikis's numerology, the prevailing tripartite formula comprises a Trinitarian symbolism, whereas the fourfold arrangement of the first part suggests the inclusion of the Virgin Mary into the symbolism of the Holy Trinity, in terms of Jungian analysis. Jung discusses the *quaternarium* or quaternity throughout philosophy and religion. The number four is important for the Pythagorean *tetraktys*: for Pythagoras the soul is a square, and perhaps this is also Pentzikis's suggestion, owing to his Pythagorean numerology. In an overall reworking of the Trinitarian dogma in the light of Plato's and the Neoplatonists' ideas, four is the origin and root of eternal nature, that is the woman who intervenes between the divine triad of the father the son and the holy spirit. Four is subsequently the origin of devil and evil, Eve the first sinner, but also the unconscious breaking through of consciousness. See "Dogma and Natural Symbols", in *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, trans. by R. F. C. Hull, C. G. Jung *The Collected Works*, ed. by Sir Herbert Read, Michael Fordham, M.D., M.R.C.P., and Gerhard Adler, Ph.D. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958), pp. 34-63.

³² 'Man encompasses all characters, good and bad. All these form a body which grows up indifferent to the past or the future. Subsequently he identifies himself with animals, wild and tamed, of the mountains and of the meadows, pets of the back-yard, the cat, the dog' (*Kyria Ersi*, pp. 323-4). This recalls, and it is possibly an allusion to, Stephen's meditation on a similar issue in the 'Proteus' episode: 'God becomes fish becomes barnacle goose becomes

The long passage scrutinizes external reality but is thoroughly subjected to the narrator's sensual and intellectual perception of reality. The passage is seemingly unrelated to the rest of the book, so that one could assume that the whole book is a flow of impressions randomly scattered within a text without order and structure. Yet, the narrator's scrutiny is part of a mosaic whose interlocking unity creates the realist setting of his narrative. The narrator also describes the propounding of the technique of a mosaic in his writing: '[...] poring over the table, I sit and put together letters, syllables and words, on a design of the local map of the city of Athens, reading the names of the streets to remember the streets I passed through.' (p. 167). This has the logic of the inventory which Pentzikis considers 'the supreme form of literary writing' and a means of avoiding sentimentality through reference to 'the facts without emotional load.'³³ This accords with Joyce's principle of anti-sentimentality and his encyclopaedic method which draws heavily upon 'the medieval techniques of the Inventory', as well as Aquinas's aesthetics.³⁴

The exploitation of this corpuscular world radically refashions the static world of Parnassian perfection and of realist verisimilitude.

Primarily I thought about making a series of circumstantial comments on the text, which was representative of the Athenian School, furnishing the things and the personae of the novel, somehow generally, abstractly and ambiguously mentioned, with more concrete details and substantiality. (*Kyria Ersi*, pp. 53-4)³⁵

Pentzikis contrasts this microscopic focus on trivia with D's Parnassian loftiness (p. 56). D's *Ersi* is considered to be a sentimental romance capable of 'persuading only some immature young ladies from the good time before the Great European War' (p. 57). When Pentzikis's narrator compares a newspaper's textual material with 'bricks and tiles' and

featherbed mountain' (*U*, 3:477-9). Pentzikis's appropriation of the same theme reappears later, in *Kyria Ersi*, pp. 323-4.

³³ 'Mia synomilia tou N. G. Pentziki me ton Antoni Fostieri ke ton Thanasi Niarcho', (p. 137).

³⁴ Umberto Eco, *The Aesthetics of Chaosmos*, p. 8.

³⁵ When he meets with the Rodanos couple he wants to present this detailed material to them. But the fictitious couple cannot understand his preoccupation with concreteness (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 223).

writing as a 'refolding of matter around its atom's molecules' (pp. 81-82), he essentially inflects D's 'ideal schemata' of beautification, embellishment, and perfection. However, when the details function as nodal points associating long sequences of thoughts, circumlocutions, fantasies and dreams, this becomes an attack encompassing the whole legacy of realism. The focus on the minute details of the narrator's scrutiny of nature shifts from plants to animals, to the narrator's wounding by the plants, to the nun Theodouli's experience of nature, to Christ, to sacraments, to flowers and excretions (pp. 198-200). The narrator's impressions, although generated under the impact of solid reality, reflect the subject's innermost world. In his extended topography of the places he visits, the narrator also compares his experiences with the ways that different writers have described the same or similar places, occasions and events. His synthetic ability takes him from Myrivilis and Mavilis to Solomos (pp. 167-70), from Dostoevsky and Papadiamandis to Shakespeare (p. 217).³⁶ The linear narration is broken: instead a multi-dimensional perspective on reality is enacted. By means of Freudian free association and dream, the surrealist techniques of montage and collage, shifting of perspective and interior monologue, the text shows an alert aesthetic consciousness, which although thematized by the narrator is clearly an expression of Pentzikis's aesthetic volition.

Pentzikis also tries to disclose the unconscious thoughts stimulated by trivia. He organizes his chaotic material as a collage of disparate events or impressions, stressing the fragmentation of the modern world or of modern identity, while simultaneously suggesting an arrangement into a design sustained by the harmony of his Christian metaphysics. The transcendence of realism is indicated from the very opening of the book, when the first-person narrator, exactly like Stephen, meditates on the mutation of all things following the rhythm of the ever-changing sea. Under the light of 'Aristotle's lantern' (p. 19), the narrator

³⁶ Alexandros Papadiamandis (1851-1911). Lorenzo Mavilis (1860-1912), in some ways a Parnassian poet. (See L. Politis, *Istoria tis Neoellinikis Logotechnias*, (p. 221)). D. Solomos (1798- 1857), the romantic poet and S. Myrivilis (1892-1969), an author of the Generation of the Thirties.

meditates on the transformation of the primal matter of life. Being simultaneously a spectator and a speculator, he tries to visualize his thoughts and to conceptualize the external images. The game is very similar to Stephen's meditation, a play between subjectivity and objectivity, which takes place on the seashore a place which, for Pentzikis, is the symbolic border separating the present world from the hereafter.³⁷ The merging of the two worlds, objective and subjective, natural and metaphysical, is represented in grotesque representations of the body, announcing and anticipating the atmosphere of the whole narrative.³⁸

The meditation on the transformation of natural phenomena and their recurrence in natural cycles is presented as birth out of death, represented in the efflorescence of a plant. With the metaphor of violet-coloured mourning lace on a bridal dress, the fertilization of the plant is announced as a death-into-life phenomenon. The offspring of the plant is a 'Horrible monster', 'a serpent' which eventually is the narrator himself (p. 18). The ceaseless transformation of matter harbours both a naturalistic and a metaphysical perspective. The former is an implicit allusion to the evolution of species - the passage from plants to reptiles and from them to mammals - and sanctions scientific discourse in a literary text.

Pentzikis exploits at length the material of the 'Proteus' episode: the conflation of forms, the watery element, the jettisoning by the sea, the carcass of a decapitated cat, the fear of the barking dog and finally the ship with a cross on top, an allusion to Christ in his own

³⁷ Pentzikis's appropriation of the motif of wandering on the seashore is mainly associated with death and life, death and rebirth, which are considered as the stages of a psychological process, as 'semblances of the ego', see his essay 'Dynatotites tis Amesotitas', in *Pros Ekklesiasmo* (Salonica: Patriarchikon Idrima Paterikon Meleton, 1970) (p. 24). Pentzikis relates the sea to all mothers and to the Virgin Mary. For him the departure from the sea is a separation from the maternal territory toward paternity, which also includes the possibility of death; death being the return to the maternal depths through drowning. Referring to Stephen's wanderings he says: 'Despite all his thoughts about suicide and his fantasies of drowned men, Stephen as a living man within the book breathes the breath of the dead. That is the reason we see him at the end of his wandering "para thin" alos", as he retreats in the same situation leaving his reveries, to identify himself with the shadow of a ship in the distant silence' (ibid, pp. 21-22).

³⁸ 'Picking up my handkerchief from the bulrushes where it was being bleached by the sun, I re-freshen the dry bed of my eyes. Now, above my eyes, on the forehead, a host of living organisms open holes [from inside]. Will they come out? I don't think so. So far, they are intolerably soft behind the claws. The very opposite happens in fact. The holes fill with sea-water. The waves rise... slap, slap... dragging along with them an old shoe. On the surface of the water a

symbolism. The opening of *Kyria Ersi* conflates the art of painting with literature. In a surrealist atmosphere, which deals with the 'evaporation of matter' and its mutation into other forms of life, all natural phenomena are manifest in disparate images, fragmented and seemingly irrelevant.³⁹ A painter's technique called 'water-sticking', a direct allusion to collage, is required to give order to the chaotic fragmentation of life. The painter depicts the decapitated head of a thief and, after he dries his wet hands on a piece of cloth, he stitches it onto his canvas. The protean properties of the 'prima materia' converge with Trinitarian consubstantiality, a concept upon which the whole book is built. Narrative techniques, archetypal patterns, motifs, the cast of characters, the plot and language all display a protean-consubstantial mobility which derives from the blending of the Homeric pagan world with Christian Orthodoxy.

With such an opening, the book advertises its break with the traditional patterns of the realist novel, and its debt to Joyce, by flaunting its innovative techniques: the focus on the random impressions of reality, on the minute details of life, the implanting of techniques of different fields of art and science in a literary text, the surrealist atmosphere of chance and dream and the language of free association. There is a protean modality in the interchanging between the third-person and the first-person narration of the narrator-artist. The puzzling thing in the shifting of voices is the participation of a narrator-artist, as a persona, in the process of his own art-making.⁴⁰ The shifting of voices is clearly distinguished in those parts of the text where the narrator's voice turns into personal narration. This is an expansion of the play between subjectivity and objectivity, a manifestation of the consubstantial nature of the characters and the authorial voice as well as a propounding of

piece of cork is tossed about, travelling to eternity' (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 14, Thaniel's translation, p. 55). The whole presentation recalls Stephen's experience in 'Proteus'.

³⁹ The images include a tongue without a head, the narrator's legs moving independently of his body, a shepherd who arranges lithographs of heroes of the Greek revolution upon his chest. They constitute the pictorial atmosphere of a landscape, initially pastoral, but rendered decayed and corrupted through the narrator's lens.

⁴⁰ Aragis recognizes in Pentzikis's text a narrator with protean characteristics, in 'N. G. Pentzikis', in *Mesopolemiki Pezografia*, VII, p. 54.

the Protean mutation in narrative techniques. This game raises the question of identity through multiple viewpoints and role attitudes, and aspires to imitate the Cubist technique of Picasso, as mentioned in *Kyria Ersi* (p. 105).

As this handling of reality merges with Freudianism, Pentzikis gradually builds his allegory of art by deploying the Freudian analysis of dream-work. One fundamental technique used by Pentzikis is the repetition of the same textual matter in a new context in the process of developing his story. This is also a Joycean technique, in the sense that as *U* unfolds, certain motifs and thematic structures are repeated in a more complex way (*ricorso*). Pentzikis restarts the narration of a certain dream or of a thematic pattern and tries to enmesh in it new material with illuminating properties. This technique immediately derives from the Freudian concept of ‘overdetermination’, according to which the material represented in the manifest content of a dream is condensed and fragmented, brief and meagre, owing to the censorship exercised by consciousness, so that ‘each of the elements of the dream’s content turns out to have been “overdetermined” - to have been represented in the dream-thoughts many times over’.⁴¹ Consider the following:

I suspect that, now, in trying to find a second start for the narration especially of the net woven out of the streets of the capital where I strolled around as sack-stitcher, in order to make a correct start, I have to find an initial second person to look like and another final person to whom the energy from the initial second will be transferred. [...] each time I have to make a fresh start, I declare that the perception which I have of the dream could be likened to a row of little boxes which fit in and can be put one inside the other. (*Kyria Ersi*, pp. 155-6)

The narrator’s description of his thought as a net woven by the streets is also a direct allusion to Freud’s analysis of Goethe’s *Faust* (Part I, scene 4). Freud’s analysis occurs in a section titled ‘The Dream of the Botanical Monograph’ where, just as Pentzikis’s narrator does with plants, Freud examines a ‘dried specimen’ of an unspecified plant. Freud calls

⁴¹ S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, The Penguin Freud Library, 15 vols (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976) IV (1991), p. 389.

Goethe's verses the 'weaver's masterpiece' and compares the nature of the dream-content with Goethe's verses 'unseen the threads are knit together, / and an infinite combination grows'. Similarly Pentzikis presents his narrator as having the net on his forehead and the streets of the net 'became its threads' (p. 154). The threads are direct allusions to Freud's analysis of Goethe and the streets to his 'associative paths' of thought through which the process of 'overdetermination' takes place.⁴²

Pentzikis's synthetic impulse brings together Freud, Mallarmé and Joyce.⁴³ The common denominator of this grouping is the idea of art-making as a childlike game and relates both to his Christian and his modernist proclivity. The former deals with it as 'a Christian euphoria which springs from his conviction that all things find their harmony in Christ, who blessed those who were prepared to be like children', as Thaniel points out (p. 100-1). The latter alludes to Freud's comparison of the activity of art-making to a children's game, and to Joyce's jocoserious art, particularly to his games of language and style.⁴⁴

⁴² Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, pp. 386-390.

⁴³ Of Mallarmé, dreams, their symbolism, and artistic playfulness, he says: 'Exposing their dream concerning life, usually the authors present themselves as pessimistic and melancholic; [...] The most disarming of all cases is indisputably that of Mallarmé. He was not given simply one box but quite the smallest of all, that which because of its size cannot contain anything, it can look like a fine piece of work, but would be discarded in a pharmacy as useless. The poor child, for all his love and devotion to the game, showed us to the ultimate the slightest shift and alteration of viewpoint of the little box at his disposal, analyzing the light as the clearest of crystals cannot do, it was impossible for him not to shout in complaint: "Hélas! Je suis las et j'ai lu tous les livres", coming to the pessimistic conclusion that truly "Jamais un coup de dés n'abolira le hasard"' (p. 156-7). (Actually these verses from Mallarmé are misquoted by Pentzikis, possibly because he quotes from memory. The correct verses are: "Hélas! La chair est triste et j'ai lu tous le livres" and "Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard"). And Pentzikis's narrator with no interruption shifts his thought to Joyce: 'Son of a poor working woman, he could not find happiness by enjoying more or bigger or better toys, but in his case, the demonic Irish author happened, by coincidence to receive the strict regime of a church school as a small child, emptying his ego in about the same way as the ancient Egyptians embalmers emptied corpses in order to preserve the image, the dwelling place of Ka, and he reached for true beauty (no matter how much he complained that he was deprived of any opportunity to play), recommending warmly the study of the Greeks who, as is known, were always children at play' (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 157).

⁴⁴ 'Should we not look for the first traces of imaginative activity as early as in childhood? [...] The creative writer does the same as the child at play. He creates a world of fantasy which he takes very seriously - that is, which he invests with large amounts of emotion - while separating sharply from reality'. Freud, 'Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming' in *Art and Literature*, The Penguin Freud Library, 15 vols (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990), XIV (1990), pp. 130-141 (pp. 131-2).

4.3.c. Myth, Religion, Identity

Kyria Ersi, being an allegory of art, raises the issue of a comparison of the structure of fiction with the structure of human identity just as *U* does with the structure of myth and the consciousness of contemporary man. Thus, one could say that Pentzikis's work is metafictional, dealing with fiction-making without referring to real people and their lives. This, however, would be a hasty conclusion which would not take into account the overall project of Pentzikis's work, and his belief in miracles. *Kyria Ersi* seems to be such a miracle, a resurrection, an animation of a female fictitious character and/or an ancient goddess who represents the anima, the otherness, and the product of writing of the suffering subject of enunciation. As Seferis phrases it:

The entire book of *Kyria Ersi* is a fragmentation of the ego, place and time. But this is not the important thing. What is important is that he [Pentzikis] was able to produce a rising goddess out of the fragments.⁴⁵

For Pentzikis myth is a symbolic structure sustaining man's attitude towards universal values and phenomena, an exigency, a necessary device or belief for the survival of the individual in modernity. Myth can be a consolation for the chaotic fragmentation of everyday life, the armature for the strengthening of the individual before 'the evil of time' and death. For this reason he keeps encountering myth through its adaptation to Christianity, especially in the Neoplatonists.⁴⁶ In his work, myth is infused by religious feelings. His myth is religion, but a religion which highlights its secular perspective, which does not hesitate to mock the sublime and to create irony from the destiny of the modern individual. This secular perspective helps to maintain Pentzikis's equanimity toward human

⁴⁵ G. Seferis, *I Ores tis Kyrias Ersis* p. 79, Thaniel's translation. This is comparable to Ellmann's comment that Joyce 'conceived of his entire book as a silent, unspoken portrayal of an archetypal man who would never appear and yet whose body would slowly materialize as the book progressed, linguafied as it were into life', *'Ulysses' on the Liffey*, p. 73.

⁴⁶ In 'Pote den tha Gino Logotechnis' *Iperkheilisi Idaton*, p. 199.

defects, which he projects as the only substantial elements of human identity.⁴⁷ Pentzikis's mingling of the sacred with the secular can very well explain the coexistence of pagan and Christian elements in his use of myth in modernity, and his jocoserious and corporeal treatment of art-making.

He acknowledges the mythic foundation of religion and does not reject its pagan origins. On the contrary, he endorses it as a way out of the individual's predicament. This is the reason why the pagan and superstitious elements abound and fuse with his faith. The religious and the secular, the pagan and the Christian, have a symbiotic existence which permits shifting from one symbol to another, from one thematic structure to another. A good example is the notion of metempsychosis. In Joyce, this is a jocoserious device employed to approach the mystery of personal identity, 'to suggest that it may become the medium for the reincarnation of the dead'.⁴⁸ With Bloom it is the general archetype of the questing voyager which is called into being, as Bell puts it. Pentzikis uses a similar device to suggest the continuity of identity. His narrator, lost in the labyrinth of his meditation, tries to discover his own identity by communicating with all possible types of his personality, namely the late Pavlos, and the late Andreas Dimakoudis, as well as a fourth person whom he assumes to be Ersi's husband. The suggestion is that he tries to communicate with the underworld using the telephone cable as the umbilical cord connecting the dead and the living, as Stephen does in 'Proteus'.⁴⁹ In *Kyria Ersi*, however, it is the use of metamorphosis, interlaced with the questing voyager, which suggests the

⁴⁷ In talking about the monks of Holy Mountain he says: 'Of course, the ministers and the servants of the church may not often clean the lamp-glasses of the candles, may not be good novices, may be raped or rape, but you will always find something in the structure of the church to free you from misery' ('Mia synomilia tou N. G. Pentziki me ton Antoni Fostieri ke ton Thanasi Niarcho', p. 135). In another interview he relates, on the same issue: 'I was convinced about Holy Mountain, not because the monks are good or bad, or they continue the Byzantine tradition, but for the reason that [...] I realized that the church is the bridal chamber and the monks, by going to church all day, do nothing but have sex. If, therefore, all of us instinctively believe that eros is happiness, then the monks of Holy Mountain are happy for this reason' (*Iperkheilisi Idaton*, p. 210).

⁴⁸ M. Bell, *1900-1930*, p. 11.

⁴⁹ 'Hello, hello. I ask for Andreas Dimakoudis's telephone number. From the exchange they answer me that the connection will be delayed. The overseas line has to be freed. I shall wait. I am sure that at a certain point the connection will be carried out. I will be connected with all; I will also communicate with the needle and thread in the hands of Mrs Ersi. [...] I am a person who proceeds by collecting the bits and pieces of myself, behind the enchanted

continuity of identity manifested in the sameness of all things. As Ruit Horas, the grotesque personification of time, says to Ersi during their journey:

It's all the same thing [...] all the elements of nature [...] are used as points and measures in man's perception, who imagines time [...] to pass separating the past from the present, whereas essentially all time units [...] are motionless in space. (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 108)

Pentzikis, like Joyce, conflates in one single character's life an immense span of time. Kalliadis the archaeologist, Mitropoulos the musician, elements of nature and the narrator himself blend in one persona, to suggest the sameness of time. Turning the Freudian dream-work into a phantasmagoria, Pentzikis transforms his narrator into a sack-stitcher, the Emperor's jester, Karagiozis, the snake-plant, eventually reifying his identity through the needle and thread metamorphosis. Similarly, Ersi and Pavlos undergo metamorphosis, taking all the possible roles of paternal and maternal origins. Ersi embodies all fictitious feminine characters from Aretousa, the young heroine of the Cretan Renaissance romance *Erotokritos*, to Madame Bovary. She is identified with the historical personages of the Emperor's wife Zoe, his mistress Alani and eventually the eternal mother the Virgin Mary. Pavlos is identified with Drosinis, Rilke, Constantine Monomachos, and eventually with the narrator, the artist-son himself. Subsequently, in the narrator's hallucinatory world, the fusion of identities constitutes the line that leads to his 'retrogressive progression' into history and literature. The Parnassian romance becomes Homeric adventure, Byzantine chronicle, folk-tale, chivalric romance, family romance and eventually the epic of modernity.

Pentzikis's assimilation of Joyce's transposition of myth into modernity blends with his religious perspective and his scientific outlook.⁵⁰ He writes: 'Myth, or perhaps better mythic

mirrors of the Labyrinth. 'Mrs Ersi, Mrs Ersi don't go, wait' (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 338). Compare this to Joyce's 'Hello! Kinch here. Put me on to Edenville. Aleph, alpha : nought, nought, one' (3: 39-40).

⁵⁰ Talking about myth he says: 'Our belief that by walking in the present we can sometime find ourselves in the Ilines or Billines, or Alamalakousines of the Fairy tales, is something which differentiates someone who uses mythic thought, from an author who uses myth like Joyce. Joyce replaces the rock flung by the Cyclops at Odysseus, who escaped by ship, with a biscuit tin. In order to keep our ideas about things, by researching the biscuit tin, we should find its respective equivalences to the rock, and particularly those which would make it an object of human

thought, can be construed as a substitute for the animal instinct relinquished by the developed human species. [...] I emphasize that mythic thought bridges the gap between scientific knowledge and everydayness'.⁵¹ This miscellany of ideas invites the implantation of divergent discourses in language, from anthropology and psychophysiology to theology. The polyphony of the text, then, derives from this juggling with ideas from various domains, the ceaseless transformation of symbols accompanied by the metamorphoses of the body and the shifting of roles in Pentzikis's play on the mystery of the individual's identity. This mobility of the text accommodates a twofold hermeneutic of all these phenomena. On one side stands a naturalistic approach to the physical phenomena, an attitude resembling Stephen's meditation on the seashore on the *prima materia*. On the other, the *Homoousion*, the doctrine of the consubstantial nature of the Trinity, provides the analytical matrix which brings together physiology and psychology, personal psychohistory and national identity.

4. 3. d. The Questing Voyage toward Identity and Art

Pentzikis's text interlaces all sorts of quests in a journey which harks back to the Homeric adventure, the chivalric and quest romances, Byzantine history and folk-tales.⁵² All these quests, however, are subordinate to the archetype of the questing voyager which, imparted to all three basic participants of the story, transforms D's romance into the epic of modern

adventure. Such an endeavour is easy for children whereas for adults it demands a religious exercise.' (*Semeioseis Ekato Imeron*, pp. 252-253).

⁵¹ 'Topografia ke Domi' in *Pros Ekklesiasmo*, p. 115-16. In the same section Pentzikis relates that his opinions are primarily based on the works of Mircea Eliade and Paul Diel, the former characterized as a religious expert and the latter a psychologist (ibid, p. 116). He also refers to Jung and his disciple Karl Kerényi's *The Gods of the Greeks* (ibid, p. 102), as his sources for the use of myth. Of course, references to Freud abound in the same book.

⁵² Mention of medieval legends, chivalric Byzantine romances (*Velthandros and Chrysantza*) (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 326), music dramas (Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*) (ibid, p. 33-34) in textual asides maintain Pentzikis's continuum from myth to fiction, from epic to novel. From the Arthurian legends and Lancelot du Lac through Mrs Ersi's embroidery to Penelope's web and Aretousa's loom, Aretousa being the young heroine of the Cretan renaissance romance *Erotokritos*. Through the story of Charidimos, another character of *Erotokritos*, the narrative shifts to the ancient myth of Cephalus and Prokris (ibid, p. 106-7). All these texts exemplify the motif of separation, wandering and reunion, an Odyssean quest which has as its destination the conquest of a woman, which is the wish fulfillment of the

man. Ersi's husband, Pavlos, seeks inscriptions at ancient sites, fragments and ruins of the historical past. Like Stephen, he reads on the seashore the signatures of the past, in this case of a Hellenic past.⁵³ In his interior monologue entitled 'the place's soul' he meditates that the Greek land hides an anima, a female soul, a nymph who keeps it alive. His search for this anima hidden in the ruins of the past eventually shifts to his search for his wife (p. 37). Ersi also undertakes a quest for sensual experience. She has taken off her clothes, thus starting an exhibitionist game with the narrator, similar to Gerty's in the 'Nausicaa' episode. But Ersi is only symbolically a virginal character. She surrenders herself to the warmth of the sun, this warmth which 'filled the flesh with hope. With this indefinable substance which resembles the pregnancy of the other, of the alien within the one and only' (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 26).

Ersi yearns for the corporeal things repressed by the ideality of D's romance. 'The pregnant hope' (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 26) has ripened in her desire and her peculiar union with the narrator suggests that she craves for a child.⁵⁴ In D's romance this is expressed in the adoption of a mute child by the couple. But in Pentzikis's updated version this will appear as gestation of logos-writing, the 'New-born child' out of the corporeal union of the artist's pen-needle with the Virginal body of Ersi. Her quest begins with memories of her childhood and an initial trauma which happened as she was playing with a little boy, her childhood companion and an early projection of her *alter ego*. She recalls her romantic meeting with Pavlos in the Athenian salon of a female member of the literati. Yet, in the present, Pavlos is far away from her as she lies abandoned and naked on the seashore.⁵⁵ Ersi recalls the day of her wedding with Pavlos, and the very moment she accepted this union.

artist-narrator of *Kyria Ersi*. Thus Pentzikis's *Kyria Ersi* interlaces the epic adventure with the quest romance in a palimpsest which moves from Homer to modern Greek literature.

⁵³ Pavlos also has a Dedalian characteristic expressed in his attempt to interpret nature with Iamblichus's system of numbers, a theological or theosophical interpretation (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 34).

⁵⁴ Ersi's desire for motherhood is also expressed in her mourning for her husband, as she speaks with the narrator and addresses him with the name of the late Andreas Dimakoudis (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 227).

⁵⁵ In a direct allusion to Stephen Dedalus's synaesthetic exercises, the narrator considers her daydreams which eventually turn out to be real dreams as follows: 'Of course I am not going to repeat the mistake of the Romantics

When she accepted it the butterfly which dwelt in her eyes opened its wings and exposed their dried river bed where as by a miracle inexhaustible tears began to spring. She cried and cried until the two empty tear-ducts flooded and her eyes widened again like the nuclei of two cells in an orgasm of regeneration and proliferation forming the plasmatic spinning-out of karyokinesis with the petaloid divisions of the chromosomes and their movement from the two poles, toward the new common membrane of the separation necessitated by life.⁵⁶ Then she felt Pavlos in reality next to her, bending and kissing her eyelashes. (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 43)

The narrator's suggestion is actually that Ersi craves for a real sensual and sexual relationship, mainly expressed in her desire to give birth, suggested by the scientific description of regeneration, proliferation, division of the cells.⁵⁷ The narrative maintains a Freudian viewpoint, referring to a primary trauma and the despondency it entails and the loss of the self in the union of the two opposite sexes. Ersi's questing-voyage has as its terminal destination the reactivation of her senses, the re-establishment of her lost happiness through the corporeal act of gestation of Logos as embroidery and blood-shedding, an echo of Penelope's web and Molly's menstruation.

Both Pavlos's and Ersi's quests are a return to origins, reunions of the terminal destination with the point of departure. Either as excavation of the ancient ruins of the place and meditation on the anima of Greek nature, or as yearning for early biological forms of life and bodily satisfaction, Pavlos and Ersi maintain a circular quest toward origin and identity. The narrator's quest also starts out from early phases of his life, and is clearly directed toward artistic emancipation intertwined with self-identity. As a student in the final classes of high school, he had read D's novel and dreamt of ideal love affairs. He wondered whether this fictional story, which he experienced as an indisputable reality, could survive in real life (p. 53), and that was the motive for his long quest into literature and life.

who, touched by the colourful mystery of the night, claimed and tried to see the light of the night with their eyes open. We see, without being able to see the light and the shades of the night, with our eyes shut' (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 40).

⁵⁶ Karyokinesis is the series of changes that take place in a dividing cell nucleus, mitosis or meiosis.

⁵⁷ The cellular division is an immediate reference to reproduction and confirms the proliferation of life in biological terms highlighting the bodily aspects of union, initially presented as ideal and abstracted, in Drosinis's sentimental romance.

Pentzikis models his plot on an alleged family triangle which projects its Freudian properties within the structure of the Homeric quest of return to origins. One can easily recognize in this construction the impact of Joyce's comedy based on the demystification of the doctrine of the Trinity. In his family romances, Freud discusses the fantasies of the adolescent who, having a low opinion of his parents, replaces them in his daydreaming by others of higher social standing.⁵⁸ Such is the attitude of the narrator who recognizes in the relationship of Pavlos and Ersi the only ideal love. Stephen fashions his own incestuous family romance through his Shakespeare theory as the narrator does with the relationship between Ersi and Pavlos, who stand for literary origins and fantasies of early identification. The narrator's psycho-historical origins are variously exemplified by Odysseus, Homer, the tragedies, Aristophanes, the Byzantine Fathers, the Athenian School, the Parnassians, Jens Peter Jacobsen (1847-1885), Rilke, and Mallarmé, as well as Greek folk tradition and poetry.

In the main, these origins maintain the androgynous properties of the male womb of imagination exemplified in *U*, whose structural pattern is echoed in *Kyria Ersi*. Pavlos and Ersi also experience the ambiguity of their own gender. Pavlos's indignation at Ersi's maternal attitude, which deprives him of his masculinity as well as Ersi's concomitant reaction to him, point to this androgynous perspective: 'It was impossible for her too to follow the same route, although she understood that with Pavlos she was obliged to undertake the masculine role, when he, with his studies, was elsewhere, in other worlds.' (p. 77). Pavlos and Ersi share the properties of androgyny in the narrator's own fantasies. This is a radical transformation of D's text in line with Joyce's interchange of roles in Stephen's view of the sea as both father ocean and great sweet-mother. Seen in the light of the narrator's antagonism to the male artist creator - Drosinis, the original author - this quest is

⁵⁸ S. Freud, 'Family Romances', in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. and trans. by James Strachey, 17 vols (London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1955) IX, pp. 236-241.

directed toward what Kristeva has argued is present in Joyce: a quest toward a “‘Father of individual pre-history”, a primitive form that possesses the sexual attributes of both parents’, the progenitor of the androgynous artist.⁵⁹

The narrator declares his intention to compete with Drosinis and Pavlos for the conquest of Ersi, who stands both for the woman and the text. His journey toward the origin of language and gender identity recapitulates the quest of the other two personae of the book, assimilating their characteristics into the personal adventure toward selfhood through art. Pentzikis breaks open the narrative temporality of D’s novel so that fictional time spills over into real time, presenting the simultaneity of past and present which stresses the multi-dimensional characteristics of this quest in time and space. The plot is based on the narrator’s attempt to unite with his precursor and with the male persona of the latter’s fiction by way of his union with the female participant of the triangle. His undertaking to conquer Ersi, a literary creation coded feminine, has as its ulterior aim the confrontation with the creator, father and husband, Ersi’s male otherness. Thus two quests interlace in the narrator’s project: one directed toward the construction of a new text coded feminine, from the very beginning, and the imaginary conquest of a woman. The other quest is aimed at confronting the male authority of the creator, with an ironic and subversive undoing of his creation. The twofold character of his quest makes him an artist-son who seeks to subvert the cultural legacy which he incorporates in his work.

⁵⁹ Kristeva, ‘Joyce the Gracehoper’, in *James Joyce The Augmented Ninth*, ed. by Bernard Benstock (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1988), p. 172.

4.4. The Body, the Text, Language

Pentzikis's interest in the body and its functions within the narrative is underwritten by his scientific background, his Freudianism and his indebtedness to Joyce. He transcribes all spatio-temporal, cosmic, emotional and mental phenomena in bodily terms, surpassing Joyce's subtleties in the use of the body.⁶⁰ The body supports his idiosyncratic comedy, a mixture of satire and parody which mocks the hypocrisy of lofty spirituality.⁶¹ His comedy is not as hilarious as Joyce's nor is it as defiant with bodily manifestations when it comes to sexuality or perversion. However the density of his symbolism, replete with overt sexual allusions, is comparable to Joyce's.

Pentzikis magnifies the distortions of the human body under a microscope, as it were. In a blending of dream with real life and through the device of metamorphosis, Pentzikis resorts to the grotesque to debunk the embellishment of everyday life as presented in a fictional ideality, underscoring its sinister and hideous aspects. Although Pentzikis assimilates certain elements of Joyce's phantasmagoria in 'Circe', including bestiality and reification of human identity, his use of the grotesque breaks with *U's* in the sense that Joyce's grotesque images are his characters' fantasies occurring in the commonplace. In Pentzikis, however, bodily mishaps and deformities invade the text with a verisimilitude of their own, like secular miracles or magic infusing the text with a surrealist overtone reminiscent of Bulgakov's grotesque inhabited by both magic and religion.⁶² Bodily deformities presented in dreams have a folkloric and/or mythic echo and are overcharged

⁶⁰ See Pentzikis's mapping of his body on to his native city, cited on our first chapter, quoted from 'Topio tou Ine', in *Mitera Thessaloniki*, pp. 30-31.

⁶¹ This also reflects his humorous spirit which he adjusts to his Christian belief. He believed that 'Christianity need not be gloomy' (Thaniel, *Homage to Byzantium*, p. 101), and that laughter is part of human nature. In this perspective his comedy departs from the earthly and bodily which mocks the illusions of the spiritual and attempts to restore a harmony between body and soul.

⁶² In Mikhail Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita*, the devil disguised as a magician descends upon Moscow in the 1930s to befuddle a population which denies the existence of both God and the devil.

with Freudian and Jungian symbolism, also harking back to Rabelaisian comedy or a biblical parody, as the snake-plant suggests.

The grotesque is a subcategory of comedy. It ranges from innocent exaggerations of caricature to terrifying monsters, ogresses, and creatures with ghastly appearance.⁶³ Philip Thomson, in his survey of the grotesque, locates it in the coexistence of the comic with horror, with the unnatural, the odd, the unreasonable, and the uncanny and fearsome residues of human fantasies.⁶⁴ Like the comic the grotesque demands a complicated mentality upheld by a rich emotional substratum containing ambivalent elements. However, in its response it provokes a weird and sometimes unpleasant emotional conflict deriving from its twofold nature, in the comic and the uncanny. Two basic elements of the grotesque are encountered in both Bakhtin's and Thomson's analyses: one is its strong manifestation in bodily terms and the other is its playful character. These attributes are exemplified in Pentzikis's reversal of the Parnassian aesthetics.

4.4.a. Exposing Ideality

In Pentzikis's undoing of D's ideal schemata, *Ersi's* feminine code is placed in question and undergoes a radical transformation. Pentzikis's treatment of Mrs Ersi is comparable to Joyce's of Gerty MacDowell.⁶⁵ In 'Nausicaa' Joyce, keeping the Homeric text concealed, exposes Gerty in terms of sentimental pulp fiction. On Sandymount strand, in the landscape of the seashore where Stephen Dedalus had developed his meditation on art and nature,

⁶³ Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, p. 306.

⁶⁴ Philip Thomson, *The Grotesque* (London: Methuen, 1972).

⁶⁵ As Budgen notes, 'She is described in the familiar novelette style of the period, and we must remember that *Poppy's Paper* and *Florrie's Paper*, with their yarns about typists and factory hands who get off with the young governor in his sports Bentley, had not yet, in 1904, supplanted the *Bow Bells* and *Heartsease* novelettes, where the young governess makes the crowded ballroom floor gasp with her beauty, dressed in a simple white frock and wearing a single white rose. Carefully listening we can hear undertones of Gerty's own Sandymount outlook and dialect in the rich prose of the *Heartsease Library*' (Budgen, *The Making of 'U'*, p. 209).

Gerty, the lonely virgin and female counterpart of Stephen, is juxtaposed with a mature stranger who turns out to be Bloom. The peculiar encounter of the two protagonists takes place through a mutual sexual interplay of voyeurism and exhibitionism. Both have arrived at the seashore preoccupied with their fantasies and the frustration of their lives. Gerty is absorbed in her thoughts about romantic love and the desire for social and cultural accomplishment. Bloom has just been kicked out of the pub in 'Cyclops'. He has had a difficult day, and now he is preoccupied with Molly's adultery in her afternoon appointment with Boylan. She, the lonely virgin entrapped in ideality and fantasies, and he, a reprobate and outcast, occupy the static picturesque landscape of the 'Nausicaa' episode. In the course of the episode they will be sexually excited in an autoerotic game of distanced glances and miraculous projections.

Pentzikis appropriated certain elements from Joyce's 'Nausicaa' including the theme of Mariolatry.⁶⁶ It seems that with or without knowing Joyce's explanatory schemes, Pentzikis could read through his text the crucial points of correspondence.⁶⁷ The 'Nausicaa' episode, apart from its overt allusions to the Virgin Mary and the church, has in its correspondences the following symbols: Art: painting (G & L); organ: eye, nose; symbol: virgin (G) and/or Onanism, Feminine, Hypocrisy (L); technique: tumescence detumescence (G) and/or retrogressive progression (L); sense: The Projected Mirage (L).⁶⁸ The underlined correspondences align with Pentzikis's re-writing of *Ersi*. Pentzikis was a painter and related painting to creative writing. Hence the static landscape of 'Nausicaa' might well

⁶⁶ In a letter to Budgen, Joyce wrote about the episode's style: "'Nausicaa' is written in a namby-pamby marmalady drawlery (alto la!) style with effects of incense, mariolatry, masturbation, stewed cockles, painter's palette, chitchat, circumlocutions, etc., etc.' (Budgen, *The Making of 'U'*, p. 210-11).

⁶⁷ In a critical essay he relates: 'I suspect that Joyce must have known the Greek commentators of Homer very well. It seems, for example, that he follows faithfully the hermeneutic of Odysseus's various adventures which correspond to stages of the catharsis of the soul' (*Pros Ekklesiasmo*, p. 13).

⁶⁸ In response to Arthur Power's question about what actually happened between Gerty and Bloom on the Beach, Joyce said, 'nothing happened between them. It all took place in Bloom's imagination'. In Arthur Power, *Conversations with James Joyce*, ed. Clive Hart (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), p. 32. We suggest that is exactly what happens with the narrator's meeting with Ersi for the re-writing of D's novel. The whole book, centered on dream, daydream and fantasy, functions as 'the Projected Mirage', which was, as Joyce related to Linati, the meaning of the 'Nausicaa' episode. For in *Kyria Ersi* nothing actually happens apart from the narrator's fantasy of the animation of the fictitious persona of Drosinis.

have inspired the picturesque narrative of *Kyria Ersi*. For comparison, we cite two characteristic excerpts from D's idyllic romance and Joyce's parody of a similar text.

D's *Ersi*:

Ersi sat before the big square mirror, she hastily twisted and pinned her rich hair like a coronet of flowers, in such a way that on the top, it shaped the helmet of an Aeginitean Athena. [...] Who is he who would dare with words to become both a painter and a marble sculptor, gazing at Ersi in the mirror? How does the mirror show Ersi? Let everybody see her in his mind's eye [...]. (pp. 11-12).

She smiled showing her teeth between her lips, pearls spread on red satin. (p. 57)

Compare that to Joyce's ironic description of Gerty: 'The waxen pallor of her face was almost spiritual in its ivorylike purity though her rosebud mouth was a genuine Cupid's bow, Greekly perfect' (13:87-89). For Gerty also the mirror plays an important role: '[...] she could have a good cry and relieve her pentup feelings though not too much because she knew how to cry nicely before the mirror. You are lovely Gerty, it said' (13:191-2).

Consider now Pentzikis's ironic approximation of D's picture.

I do not want, on the other hand, as Drosinis did, to leave the reader free to imagine her as he wishes within the framework of some altogether general adjectives. In this way the poet of *Amaranta* easily manages to safeguard his heroine's ideality, but simultaneously misses an exceptional opportunity to describe how he saw the female nudity which he loves, how it was presented to him and how it seemed to him at the time he says when Ersi, in the early morning, allowed her night-gown to slip down to her feet and stood for a moment completely naked before the mirror. (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 97)

With this comment on the Parnassian precursor he proceeds to his description:

I felt a start of surprise which froze me as I discerned the contrast of the marble whiteness of the skin in relation to the dark pubic growth. An aporia was born inside me; how could those two separate pieces of life be joined in one body. The breasts small and round, not at all pendulous, were not easily distinguishable maybe because of the distance or the play of the shadows born of the light of the open air beneath the craggy rocks. Another time, I took a furtive glance at them and I blushed. One summer morning when I had gone to their home, Mrs Ersi, who had just awakened, was wandering around in her night-gown only and, going out into the small yard, bent down to pick something up. That time,

then, when I was sitting on the little rock, I did not flush but I lost my balance and fell badly, hurting myself on the stones so that my leg hurt for a long time. (Ibid, p. 98)

Pentzikis alerts us to his assimilation of Joyce's 'Nausicaa' by foregrounding many parallels between the two narratives. The seashore scenery, the hurt leg which recalls Gerty's lameness, and the voyeuristic and exhibitionist game, all contribute to an interactive sensual play related to the art of painting and to the eye. There is also a depiction of voyeurism in *Ersi* reminiscent of Joyce's exposition of Bloom:

One day when we were sailing in a boat, Mrs Ersi, wearing shorts at this time, was sitting on the bow, in such a way that with her slightest movement I, sitting opposite, could spy something, proceeding in significant depth inside her short violet pants with my glance. Well, deep in there, I think I discerned a small mole. Later on, when reading the Odyssey, I reached the chapter where the cave of the Nereids is described to be in the deepest part of Phorkis bay, Ithaca, where the Phaeacians carry and leave the wily hero in repose; I absolutely identified in my thoughts Mrs Ersi's mole (*elia* = 'olive tree' and 'mole' in Greek - my comment), with the broad-leaved olive tree, referred to towering in front of the cave, covering with the wisdom and peace of her foliage the open entrance to the deep interior of the earth, the place which the Neoplatonic philosopher Porphyrios interprets as the symbol of the religious world. I don't know if my feelings make me risk unsupported theories, but the fact is that what I saw was most beautiful. With the slightest movement of the leg, a curved muscle moved, remarkably resembling a spoon, so that your mind took you to the silver tray being carried, with water-glasses full of coolness, a bowl full of sweets to offer. [...] Pavlos, a very clever man, at once realized where *my eye was riveted*, but he neither misunderstood nor said a thing. Only *when he saw my glance shrouded by a melancholic cloud*, after Ersi had tidied herself up and changed her position, did he stand up and, *caressing my eyes with his palm*, say: 'come on now you jerk, pull yourself together', and that was the end of the miracle, of my most intimate acquaintance with the figure, the fleshy silhouette of Mrs Ersi. (My emphases, *ibid*, pp. 98-99)

The artist-narrator's staring at Ersi's legs echoes Bloom's voyeurist play with Gerty. At the same time a palimpsest conflates Homer with Joyce and Joyce with Drosinis and Homer with Neoplatonism, showing us the loose threads of workmanship, in the mélange of different textual patterns, entwined and enmeshed with each other.

Pentzikis's undoing of D's *Ersi* encompasses the animation and the vitalization of the female character frozen by the Parnassian aesthetics. It also sustains a sort of idiosyncratic feminist perspective, deriving, though, from his Christian faith.⁶⁹ It is a literary repair in the light of Joyce's text; for 'Nausicaa' projects a false feminine ideality and a failed masculine identity impersonated in Gerty and Bloom respectively. In *Kyria Ersi*, Ersi and the narrator, who oscillates between the immature artistic persona of Stephen and the mature naiveté of Bloom, undertake the respective roles. Ersi actually incarnates everything that Gerty would like to be. Emerging from D's Parnassian world of statuary and high art, she stands for Gerty's ideal art in Pentzikis's updated version of her. The narrator's focus on her bodily features aims at stripping her, not of her garments but of her idealization.

Homer's 'Nausicaa' chapter, infiltrated by its Joycean counterpart, supplies most of the thematic motifs of *Kyria Ersi*.⁷⁰ Ersi resembles Nausicaa more than Gerty. She wears white clothes, an allusion to Nausicaa's white arms, a symbol of beauty and chastity for the Homeric period. Gerty prefers blue, the symbol of chastity for the Virgin Mary. Gerty is not of royal origins as is her mythic prototype, Nausicaa, but she would like to be of aristocratic origins or at least as beautiful as a princess.⁷¹ On the contrary, Ersi's name suggests aristocratic origins. She also is a lady, as the appellation 'Mrs' suggests, who is involved with the literati of her era, a noblewoman like Nausicaa. Pentzikis describes Nausicaa as 'a mortal noblewoman, visited by Athena who, with night-long wisdom and Bacchic dreams,

⁶⁹ In an interview with Kouroudis he says: 'Moreover, we know that the ancients did not recognize any position for women. They considered virgin woman dead. This is the reason why Theseus left Ariadne on Naxos; he did not marry her, nor did he approach her erotically. She was impregnated by the God of intoxication, Dionysus. I mean that in the ancient spirit only intoxicated could you have a relationship with a woman. Woman was for propagation, not for sex. I particularly honour women because I believe that a woman's geometrical shape is the Virgin Mary' (Kouroudis, *To Periodiko 'Kochlias'*, p. 53).

⁷⁰ Pentzikis sets the encounter of Ersi with the narrator in the light of the Homeric text. 'I take the Homeric text as a precious guide in order to study the illusions of the light on the sea where I float diving and re-emerging' (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 205). The narrator stretches out his hands to reach the depth of the sea, as Odysseus stretched out his hands to touch Nausicaa's knees, a gesture that foretells his touching of Ersi's nose. He also refers to book VII of the *Odyssey*, a book also dealing with Odysseus's adventures in Phaeacia. In Alcinous's palace Odysseus takes part in a contest. But the narrator considers handshaking as the greatest of all deeds. For him this gesture is a surrendering of the self to the other without any reasonable retreat (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 206).

⁷¹ 'Had kind fate but willed her to be born a gentlewoman of high degree in her own right and had she only received the benefit of good education Gerty MacDowell might easily have held her own beside any lady in the land and have seen herself exquisitely gowned with jewels on her brow' (*U*, 13: 99-102).

seduces her virginal mind' (*Pros Ekklesiasmo*, p. 25). If Gerty desires to be a ladylike, educated woman (*U*, 13:632-651), Pentzikis's Ersi fulfills all her aspirations. For 'Ersi [is] an educated thinking woman who has the ambition to be free and with an austere rational correctness' (p. 110). She does not fall into cheap or sentimental poetry or fiction as Gerty does. On the contrary, in her attitude to life she tries to incarnate the feminine ideality which is found in the ideal heroines of the chivalric romances, in Jens Peter Jacobsen's Endele, in Gerda, and most of all in Boye, the heroine of *Niels Lyhne*, the novel which has as its theme a man's struggle to achieve the ideal philosophy of life.⁷² The whole theme concerns ideality represented in female figures. The narrator believes that a 'man's dramatic role' derives from 'his difficult relationship with woman, when she becomes sublime ideal but at the same time does not cease to be nature, [...].'(*Kyria Ersi*, p. 290)

Ersi also shares with Gerty the feminine accessories and a preoccupation with the passing of time.⁷³ Her journey is a regressive quest through time for her lost happiness. Both Ersi and the narrator travel back into the past in order to create the future. Ersi yearns for past love and the narrator wrestles with the parochial character of this love and the story. The technique for the making of *Kyria Ersi* draws upon Joyce's 'retrogressive progression' which is the technique of the 'Nausicaa' chapter. For Pentzikis's re-making of D's novel is also a regressive journey through art and literature, as regressive as Ersi's journey in search of lost love and forms of art. The progression of the narrative is built with the scattered traits of past literary styles and genres which are put together to construct Pentzikis's

⁷² Ellmann also mentions some relationship between the 'Nausicaa' chapter of *U* and Jacobsen's novel. Talking about the fireworks which accompany Bloom's masturbation he relates: 'J. C. Maxwell has discovered that Joyce here recalls the fireworks scene from Jackobsen's novel, *Niels Lyhne*, where a girl similarly experiences fires of passion and pyrotechnics. Joyce does it better, however, and he also sees a possibility which Jackobsen did not, of symbolizing in one particular firework - the Roman candle - Roman Catholic religiosity and pagan phallicism at the same time' (*'Ulysses' on the Liffey* p. 128). *Kyria Ersi* has no pyrotechnics but it has the phallicism, the religiosity and most of all the outbursting blood of excitation.

⁷³ Ersi also has a small piece of furniture where she keeps her girlish stuff, which however is not exactly like Gerty's coquettish material; on the contrary it contains things with sentimental value, relics of the family such as her mother's jewel-box, 'the thick, blood-red velvet which lined its interior' (p. 86), her father's white glove (the colour white associates her with Nausicaa λευκώλενος, 'of white arms'. See also a similar comment about Gerty, in Gilbert, *U*, p. 283.), an egg 'curiously coloured', various shells, conch-shells, small saucers and cups, her comb red again like blood, her doll's comb, a rock in the shape of a heart.

modernist text. The family romance and the quest romance, the archetype of the questing-voyager and metamorphosis, as well as the meticulous survey of Greek and European literature, all point in this direction: the reconstruction of a new text drawn out of the residues of parochial art, a rebirth or a revival out of the ruins.

The many parallels between Ersi and Joyce's Gerty illustrate that in building his irony on female ideality Pentzikis used Joyce's *U* as his prototype.⁷⁴ In this demystification, however, Pentzikis's master-metaphor of the flesh which made the word predominantly intervenes, namely his secular idea about the corporeal role of the Virgin Mary. Ersi is treated like a virgin but only in the half of the book where she seeks for her lost happiness. In a conflation of the Homeric with the Joycean text, Ersi's encounter with the narrator is presented in a symbolic setting which while alluding to the Immaculate Conception points to the corporeal characteristic of the Virgin Mary.

When Odysseus arrives in Phaeacia exhausted by his adventures at sea, in which he was nearly drowned, Athena gives him sleep to protect him from outside dangers. She also appears in Nausicaa's dream and tells her to go to the river mouth where Odysseus is asleep. This encounter will save Odysseus's life. Similarly, Bloom, Joyce's modern Odysseus, arrives at the Sandymount strand after a tiring day seeking 'refuge and comfort for his afflictions in illusory fulfillment'.⁷⁵ His encounter with the lonely virgin, Gerty, takes place in an illusory world. Although the narrator's encounter with Ersi will not take

⁷⁴ Ersi is attracted to French fashion even more than Gerty. Her father, like Gerty's is a merchant but he is a successful one (p. 328). She also has a photocopy of Boecklin's painting titled 'Herbstgedanken' (p. 33), an allusion to Gerty's Christmas almanac picture of halcyon days which she got from the grocer, 'where a young gentleman in the costume they used to wear then with a threecornered hat was offering a bunch of flowers to his ladylove with old time chivalry through her lattice window' (*U*, 13: 334-6). In a parody of Gerty, Ersi and Joyce, Pentzikis makes the narrator offer Ersi a bunch of aubergines: 'I bought aubergines and offered them like a bunch of flowers to Ersi. What did Ersi do with them? Did she cook them or, feeling my enthusiasm, decorate the house with them?' (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 92). Also in the incidental information of *Kyria Ersi*'s narrative we find similarities to Gerty, such as the receipt of a postcard [in both cases a postcard of courtesy: in Gerty it is Mr Reggy's silly postcard (*U*, 13: 590), in *Kyria Ersi* Antonakis's postcard enclosed in his love letter, (pp. 92-93)].

⁷⁵ The whole chapter is developed through reveries, daydreams, illusions and fantasies which involve both the protagonists. It ends with Bloom's quiescence after his masturbation and sleepy withdrawal which follows nature's sleep as the day has reached its close. See Fritz Senn, 'Nausicaa', in *James Joyce's U: Critical Essays*, ed. by Clive Hart & David Hayman (London: University of California Press, 1974), pp. 277-311 (p. 277). In Pentzikis's *Kyria Ersi* too, the narrative unfolds in reveries, nostalgia, daydreams and fantasies, circumlocution on art and aesthetics, the dreams being the dominant device providing the material of the imaginary world of the book.

place on the seashore as in the Homeric and Joycean prototypes, it will be acted out within a Homeric setting, *mutatis mutandis*, and under the shadow of Joyce's 'Nausicaa'. The encounter is overcharged with symbolism, for they meet each other in an urban area whose detailed description eradicates both D's ideality and Homer's heroic quality. The narrator 'like a wandering Jew' wandered the streets of Athens without being able to find a place to stop:

Indeed the net I had on my forehead to dry in the sun during the dream, was specially woven with the streets of Athens which became its threads. This fact alone explains the meaning of the scenery where I saw that I touched Mrs Ersi's nose. The scene took place, as we shall see, at the back of the well-known hospital of the capital, 'The Annunciation', which has been extended into new buildings much bigger than the original one. To be precise I saw Mrs Ersi and touched her nose on the street between the aforementioned hospital and the American Archeological school, which has a wonderful garden with lots of trees. (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 154)

Pentzikis's setting works for his symbolism. The name of the hospital 'The Annunciation' is an overt allusion to the Virgin Mary, the hospital stands for the remedy that the narrator seeks from Ersi and the Archeological School alludes to D's parochial novel. The narrator's dream has come true and Ersi has become a widow. Now another dream of his has to come true, namely the touching of Ersi's nose.

When Odysseus saw Nausicaa, he stretched out his hand to embrace her knees in a gesture of imploring. Being also naked he covered his genitals with a bush. Pentzikis's narrator does exactly the same in symbolism which runs through the Homeric text to Genesis, to Joyce and to Drosinis. As he touches the nose of his modern Nausicaa he does not cover his genitals as Odysseus does, but the lower part of his body is transformed into the snake-plant suggesting sexual excitation as the narrator himself admits that he experienced 'a small erotic satisfaction' by touching Ersi's nose (p. 154).

However, seen within the overall Freudian and grotesque symbolism of Pentzikis's text, the touching of the nose has a more complicated symbolic function than mere sexual

satisfaction. As the narrator describes, in his dream he was not only ‘touching’ but ‘pulling’ Ersi’s nose (p. 146). The suggestion is that he caused some kind of damage to Ersi’s ideal beauty, something which is corroborated by the later piercing of her hand by the needle. Seferis who, very well acknowledges Pentzikis’s Freudian symbolism, compares what he calls the ‘rinapsia’ (ρινάψια) of Ersi with the broken nose of the ancient statue of a maiden from Chios (see illustration and Seferis’s comment on the next page).⁷⁶ Actually, Ersi has suffered all sorts of grotesque mishaps in the narrator’s fantasies. A good example is Ersi’s first metamorphosis, which occurs in her dream:

[...] Her legs and thighs stuck together. She saw her body floating like a water-lily, leaf and bud at the same time, on the agitated surface of a sea which devoured it. Nothing was left of it but the remnant of a sponge in the place of her head and at the end of her leg a scallop. [...] She was not startled when she saw some wild birds, through the multicoloured confusion of forms created by the sunset, which wanted to create flesh and remained smoke, come out suddenly and attack her breast. One after the other they came suckling at her nipple; when after more than an hour the birds left, she had no breasts, she had no chest or nipple where the newborn suckles and becomes man. In their place a butterfly resided. It replaced her eyes. (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 42)⁷⁷

Within this set of symbolic wounds, this gesture is a blow to Ersi’s ideal beauty, which transforms her into an avatar of all maiden statues of antiquity, ‘Greekly perfect’.⁷⁸ At the same time, it could be construed as a symbolic wound on a whole literary tradition with superficial classicism and outlandish obsession, debunking Parnassian ideality exactly as Joyce does with the French romance tradition.⁷⁹

The further implications of the touching of the nose derive from its nodal position in the narrative and the sexual and textual transformation it connotes, as suggested by the

⁷⁶ Seferis, *I Ores tis Kyrias Ersis*, pp. 49-52 and on Pentzikis’s Freudian symbols, pp. 59-65.

⁷⁷ In fact Ersi’s metamorphosis is an allusion to the ‘Lotus-Eaters’ episode, where, Bloom, like Mrs Ersi, experiences the levitation of his body in the bath, and his genitals are described as ‘a languid floating flower’ (*U*, 5: 571).

⁷⁸ The theme of the broken nose occurs once more in another of the narrator’s dreams when in front of Zoe’s grave he sees a big bird with broken beak and he experiences ‘an abyss of broken marble’ around him (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 214).

⁷⁹ The romance tradition survives in ‘Nausicaa’ ‘as a verbal residue, as a francophone affectation, “a languid queenly *hauteur*” (13:103)[...], Margot Norris, ‘Modernism, Myth and Desire in “Nausicaa”’, *JJQ*, 28 (1998), 37-50 (p. 40).



Ἡ «Χιώτισσα» κόρη (Μουσεῖον Ἀκροπόλεως Ἀθηνῶν, ἀρ. 675) εἶναι γλυπτὸ τοῦ Στ' αἰῶνα π.Χ. Ὅφειλει τὴν ὀνομασία της στὸ ἀνοιχτὸ γκρίζο μάρμαρό της ὅσο καὶ στὴν γλυπτική της — ποὺ εἶναι πιὸ αἰσθησιακὴ καὶ πιὸ περίτεχνη ἀπὸ ἐκείνη τῶν Ἀττικῶν κορῶν τῆς ἴδιας ἐποχῆς. Ἡ «ριναψία» τῆς Κυρίας Ἑρσης κάνει τὸν Τρελὸ νὰ θυμηθεῖ αὐτὸ τὸ ἄγαλμα καὶ τὴν σπασμένη μύτη του. Βλ. ἐδῶ σελ. 49.

Reproduced from Seferis's *I Ores tis Kyrias Ersis*

grotesque metamorphoses and the word-play, 'myti-mitos'. The nose has always played a very important role in the grotesque images of the body. Its modern version can be found in the caricature or the cartoon, and according to Bakhtin, it 'always symbolizes the phallus' (p. 316).⁸⁰ During the narrative, Ersi has been represented with masculine properties in relation to her husband Pavlos. Her education as well as her aloof attitudes towards art and life transcend the boundaries of the traditional housewife. Her presence jeopardizes the masculine identity and gender restriction of her husband as of the narrator himself. In this sense the 'touching' of the nose is a figurative mutilation; the haughty (snooty) Mrs Ersi loses her ideality through damage to her nose, a sort of symbolic castration.

The grotesque accommodates destruction or a mutation which always entails renewal, represented in the form of the rejuvenating body. And that is what happens when the narrator, in a synaesthetic reaction to the touching of the nose, feels the lower part of his body transformed into a bushy, smelly and clammy plant, which recalls Bloom's onanism, the snake of the fall, and Odysseus's bush covering his genitals. This transformation is clearly related to his genitals as indicated by the metamorphoses he suffers in front of Zoe's grave (pp. 212-18), which are all of ithyphallic character. It is also indicated in Mrs Ersi's expression, 'what a beautiful flower you have!' (p. 218), which recalls Martha's addressing of Bloom as Henry Flower in 'Lestrygonians', and has a clear Freudian and sexual suggestion.⁸¹ This also becomes evident through the narrator's fantasizing on the mystery of her bedroom shared with Pavlos, as he looks at 'this beautiful plant' (p. 218).⁸² (See

⁸⁰ As Bakhtin relates, this idea historically derives from the popular superstitions in medicine of the 16th century, according to which the size and the potency of the genital organs can be inferred from the dimensions and the form of the nose. Laurent Joubert, in *Erreurs populaires et propos vulgaires touchant la médecine et le régime de santé*, provides all information on the issue. In the Middle Ages and Renaissance, this image of the nose prevailed, as is proved by the famous carnival 'Dance of the Noses' of Hans Sachs (*Rabelais and his World*, p. 316).

⁸¹ In the 'Lestrygonians' episode Martha's and Henry Flower's courtesy is exchanged in the language of flowers. In Bloom's stream of consciousness it is presented as follows: 'language of flowers. They like it because no-one can hear. Or a poison bouquet to strike him down. Then walking slowly forward he read the letter again, murmuring here and there a word. Angry tulips with you darling manflower punish your cactus if you don't please poor forgetmenot how I long violets to dear roses when we soon anemone meet all naughty nightstalk wife Martha's perfume.' (5: 261-6). The language of flowers derives from Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* (p. 430-431). In the Freudian analysis of a woman's dream of flowers, the flowers are interpreted as a means of fertilization thus resembling genitals.

⁸² See also Seferis's acknowledgement of this Freudian symbolism in *I Ores tis Kyrias Ersis*, p. 65.

illustration on next page of Pentzikis disguised as a plant to represent the narrator of *Kyria Ersi*).

Pentzikis's narrator incorporates the world of flora into his own body, notably with the snake-plant metamorphosis. Not only does it retain the coexistence of the human traits with elements of the natural world, but also in its transformed part it inhabits the world of fauna and flora, the snake-plant being essentially plant, but animal-like in appearance, in the shape of the evil serpent. This metamorphosis exemplifies the double body, which is the basic characteristic of the grotesque, in Bakhtin's analysis (*Rabelais*, p. 318). The weird encounter of the protagonists may well suggest an interchange of gender attributes, since Ersi 'gives' the narrator her nose and he offers her his flower. Pentzikis then employs the world of flora also as a talisman for perversion, as his 'moly', protecting him from the phantasmagoria of the unconscious. 'Moly', the magic flower that Hermes gave to Odysseus to preserve him from Circe's wiles, is found also in Joyce, represented in Bloom's potato, a relic from his mother, kept in his pocket as a talisman against his own misadventures.⁸³ The grotesque double body will be preserved throughout the narrative until its replacement by the symbiosis of the narrator with his wife in the nocturnal bed. As the whole venture ends up with Ersi's bleeding and the narrator assuming his masculine voice at the end of the book, as he lies next to his wife in bed, this reciprocation exorcizes perversion and safeguards gender normality through the matrimonial veil.

The touching of the nose is also another allusion to Joyce's 'Nausicaa' in which the correspondent organ is nose. If the 'Nausicaa' chapter is replete with incense and

⁸³ The Moly plant moved Joyce's interest. 'Think of that symbolism' Joyce commented, 'a white flower with black root. Other flowers are tintured all through with their colour, but this alone of all flowers has a black root with a white flower'. To William Bradley, whom he consulted as well as Budgen, Joyce pointed out that if Circe's palace was a brothel, then Moly must be something to confer immunity from syphilis. Syphilis, he fancied, derived from *syn phileis*, 'together with loving, connected with it' but Bradley took the view that it derived from *su philos*, 'swine love'. [...] Ellmann also relates that Joyce consulted Baroness St. Leger, and she suggested that 'Moly was *allium niger* - garlic, an interpretation homely enough to interest him'. He also cites Victor Bérard's opinion that Moly belonged to the language of Gods and was a sand-plant (*JJ*, p. 496). Joyce's etymological interest fully accords with Pentzikis's preoccupation with punning and plants. As the correspondence of the sounds of the word Moly to Molly's name is a word game which can be interpreted as conferring immunity from perversion through marriage. The pun is comparable to Pentzikis's 'mitos-myti'.



‘Ο Νίκος Γαβριήλ Πεντζίκης μεταμορφωμένος —όπως ο αφηγητής του *Μυθιστορήματος της Κυρίας Έρσης*— από τη μέση και κάτω σε Φιδόχορτο ή Δρακοντιά (Δρακοντία ή κοινή -*Dracunculus vulgaris*). Βλ. έδω σελ. 65.

Pentzikis's photo is reproduced from G. Seferis's *I Ores tis Kyrias Ersis*

Mariolatry coming from the church of the Virgin Mary on the promontory of Howth, *Kyria Ersi* is suffused by the fragrance of flowers, plants, the smell of excretions of divergent micro-organisms, and of foul-smelling plants, all deriving from Pentzikis's botany. Through Pentzikis's favourite birth-death motif, however, all nature's odour is turned into the filthy smell of organic excretions. The narrator proceeds to a thorough discussion of the function of smell which refers to the excretions of the plants and of organisms in general, and their impact on the nose (p. 196-200). 'What is an excretion?' he asks. 'What does it mean if we separate excretion from bodily waste? Every excretion is essentially a living death' (p. 200). In Joyce's 'Nausicaa' a similar motif of flowers and odour prevails.⁸⁴ However, Gerty's perfumes and Molly's lotion turn into an onion smell (*U*, 13:938), 'dog-smell' (*U*, 13:1028), smell like 'potted herrings stale' (*U*, 13:1033), all of these bad smells condensed into the smell of a woman's menstruation which occupies the largest part of Bloom's thought.⁸⁵ Pentzikis couldn't have found a more resourceful matrix for his allegory of writing than the shedding of blood. The narrator's description of his transformed lower body into a plant with a 'nasty smell' recalls Bloom's thoughts of the smell of a man's genitals:

Mansmell, I mean. [...] Women buzz around it like flies round treacle.[...]The tree of forbidden priest. O, father, will you? Let me be first to. That diffuses itself through the body, permeates. Source of life. And it's extremely curious the smell. Celery sauce. (*U*, 13: 1036-40)

The narrator says:

[...] We sensed something stink very badly and we discovered that the awful smell came from the so-called plant (*Arum Dracunculus*) which grows an extremely flamboyant flower and is colloquially called the snake-plant, an atom of which had sprung from there attracting into the purple coloured spathe of its inflorescence, a multitude of insects and little flies. (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 148)

⁸⁴ Fritz Senn observes that 'the chapter's style is a kind of "language of flowers" like the one Bloom makes up after reading Martha's letter.' In F. Senn, 'Nausicaa' in *James Joyce's U: Critical Essays*, p. 298.

⁸⁵ Bloom thinks how many women may have their period on that day in Dublin, he thinks of Martha's roses, of Gerty's and Molly's menstruation; all of his thoughts are associated with his wondering how women might feel in that region: 'Wonder how is she feeling in that region' (*U*, 13: 997). Womb envy is associated with menstrual blood and woman's ability to give birth.

Pentzikis also appropriates Joyce's motif of the lonely virgin to elevate his Ersi to extreme heights. His narrator, while waiting for Ersi in a crowded place, says: 'I raised my head and looked up at the sky. She would come from there' (p. 249). This elevation, mostly resembling the inflated rhetoric of Joyce's narrative - the tumescence and detumescence correspondence - with its plethora of circumlocutions, only aims at a radical deflation: the bringing down to earth of Ersi. One recalls the fireworks of Joyce's 'Nausicaa', accompanying Bloom's ejaculation. *Kyria Ersi* has no fireworks or their bodily counterpart, but has the inflated narrative and its deflation not in sperm but in blood. That is why the narrator's final metamorphosis is represented as a needle and thread pricking Ersi's finger and causing her to bleed. Before this symbolic sexual intercourse with the narrator, and by becoming a widow, Ersi actually has returned to virginal status, thus fulfilling the narrator's first dream in which her husband died.⁸⁶

As the touching of the nose (myti) was associated with the unravelling of Ariadne's thread (mitos), for the new novel-making, the narrator's final metamorphosis into a needle and thread perfectly suggests that he assumes the feminine side of his ego. He will recover his masculine identity only when he pricks Ersi's finger.⁸⁷ The pricking of Ersi's finger, then, has the value of sexual intercourse which brings about the haemorrhage out of which the text is written.⁸⁸ Ersi's blood and flesh sustains the androgynous character of this art and the blending of gender roles which would allow Pentzikis to say, *Madame Ersi, c'est moi*.

⁸⁶ 'First Ersi moved, considering Pavlos to be dead. He had died [...] on Wednesday, but she as if nothing had happened was not upset, wore clothes as red as roses without realizing that she had to change.' (p. 59). Ersi's red clothes is another allusion to Bloom's dream mentioned in 'Nausicaa': 'Dreamt it last night? Wait something confused. She had red slippers on.' (13:1040). Ersi's widowhood is also associated with Bloom's thoughts, at the chapter's close, about Dignam's widow.

⁸⁷ The penetration of the skin tissue recalls Bloom's 'Tell you what it is. It's like a fine veil or web they have all over the skin, fine like gossamer, and they're always spinning it out of them [...]' (*U*, 13: 1019-20).

⁸⁸ Even Thaniel, in his monograph on Pentzikis, ironically comments on this bleeding as follows: 'The needle pierces the soft finger of Mrs Ersi. The blood to flow is said to be the faith which restores to the narrator his human form. Perhaps Mrs Ersi tried to embroider too much' (*Homage to Byzantium*, p. 58).

4.4.b. The Degraded Artist-son

The narrator's Bloomian misadventures are incited by the world of solid reality. However, they take form and shape within the illusionary landscape of his dreams and the hallucinatory ambiance of his fantasies in a way that recalls Joyce's technique in the phantasmagoria of the 'Circe' episode, without, though, the theatrical setting.⁸⁹ The narrator, discouraged and disappointed from his exhausting efforts to bring D's novel into modernity, undergoes a series of somatic and character metamorphoses. He loses track of himself and reaches the point of wondering who he really is. His degradation is associated with his second dream of the sack-stitcher's folk-tale and its association with the story of the Byzantine Emperor, Constantine Monomachos.⁹⁰ The sack-stitcher's folk-tale provides the folkloric structure for the grotesque which sanctions the magic leading to the tailor's metamorphosis into a needle and thread, at the end of Pentzikis's phantasmagoria. The implement which he uses for his work replaces his very existence. The sack-stitcher's metamorphosis anticipates the reification of the narrator's identity. Most of the narrator's misadventures occur in the Emperor's palace. There, as if entering the palace of Joyce's Circean phantasmagoria, he undergoes a series of bodily metamorphoses and character transformations.⁹¹ The Nighttown theme is indirectly insinuated by the narrator's visit to an awkward shop owned by a man called Dionysus with a neon sign offering an overnight service for lovers.⁹²

⁸⁹ Particularly from the second part onwards, where the narrator shifts from the artist-son's role to the mature state of a father creator, as it were, and in the first section which has the title 'dream and destiny', the narrator is transferred to an entirely dream world; fairy tales, myth and Byzantine chronicles sustain the imageries of the chapter which at certain points turns into a hallucinatory experience.

⁹⁰ The narrative revolves around the narrator's three dreams: the first is the announcement of the death of Pavlos, associated with the initiation of the family romance with an incestuous and Oedipal bias; the second is the sack-stitcher's dream encompassing the touching of Ersi's nose, and the third is the dream where the narrator dies and is transformed into needle and thread in the hands of Ersi.

⁹¹ He feels the sack-stitcher's tap upon his forehead and encounters the plant *Arum Dracunculus*, the snake-plant, which will subsequently replace the lower part of his body.

⁹² The allusion is very subtle but it is clearly shown that this is a brothel, at the reception of which a young woman sets the appointments, and where a young medical student often visits.

In an attempt to show the dark aspects of the religious schemes of Byzantium, Pentzikis unveils the divine and metaphysical elements which concealed corruption and lewdness in the Byzantine tradition. Reworking the Byzantine Psellos's history of the life of the emperor Constantine Monomachos, the narrator focuses on two aspects of the emperor's life, both handled from a secular perspective: paternity and sexuality. After a psychological analysis of the paternal role of the Emperor, based on the consubstantial relation of the son with the father, the narrator takes on the role of the Emperor's son and gets involved in the latter's sexual games with his mistress. It is from this moment onwards that his mishaps reveal their Bloomian origins.

The king of the folk-tale is conflated with the Emperor Constantine, whose 'childlike nature' is appreciated by the narrator and Pentzikis himself.⁹³ Constantine had a very active and provocative sexual life, as described in Psellos's history. He was married three times, despite the religious restrictions and the Patriarch's will. His last wife was Zoe, a name which in Pentzikis's text has a multi-vocal function since it alludes to sexual life ('Zoe' in Greek meaning life) and to Joyce's Zoe, the whore of Nighttown. The emperor was also famous for his illicit sexual affairs, the most notorious of which was his affair with Princess Alani, a very beautiful young lady, though without Byzantine origins. Such was her beauty and the change of her appearance once she became the emperor's Princess, says Psellos, 'that this woman had turned into another Proteus'.⁹⁴ Pentzikis, who is fascinated by anything protean, shifts the female role from Alani to Zoe, and from there to Ersi, thus pushing the narrator, already transformed into the sack-stitcher, into his Circe-like phantasmagoria.

The narrator falls in love with the Emperor's wife, later to be Mrs Ersi, and is dragged into court transformed into the folkloric hero of Karagiozis, the Greek 'Punch' of the

⁹³ The playfulness and the childlike comedy of the grotesque, as observed by both Bakhtin and Thomson, also befit Pentzikis's attraction to childlike games, playfulness being the essential element employed in his narrative and language.

⁹⁴ Michael Psellos, *Chronografia*, trans. by Aloe Sideri (Athens: Agra, 1993) p. 270.

shadow theatre. The scene resembles Bloom's arraignment before the court for his seduction of Martha. Karagiozis is a grotesque figure, a hunchback, with a huge curved nose, big ears and asymmetrical arms (see illustration on next page). He usually plays the role of the scapegoat, and starves in poverty. The significance of his misery is highlighted by his bodily deformities which in Pentzikis's text are accompanied by stuttering, inarticulate cries and indecent gesticulation. In an exalted gibberish, a mixture of rustic Greek language with stock phrases recalling Bloom's plea before the court, the narrator, transformed into a caricature in an attempt at self-defence, explains that he could not resist the beauty of the Emperor's wife. So he fell for her but is still loyal to the emperor. At the end of his speech he presents himself as Voilas, the Emperor's buffoon, a historically ambivalent man according to Psellos's history.⁹⁵ Voilas was known for his homosexual relationship with the emperor. The idea of homosexuality is subtly introduced through the emperor's gifts to Voilas and his fulfillment of each of his intimate's desires for power and glory. The narrator's mishaps, which have a direct correspondence to Bloom's misadventures, also associate the emperor's palace with Circe's. The narrator enjoys all the Emperor's attentions after the court releases him. Just like Bloom, he ascends to an honorable administrative position. The emperor dresses him in his own clothes and he becomes emperor, holding the sceptre of power.⁹⁶ Eventually the emperor and his buffoon identify with each other, acknowledging man's impotence before God. Their coalescence comes about under the impact of the grave of the emperor's wife's just as Stephen's and

⁹⁵ Psellos comments on Voilas that he was a villain, a stutterer, who whenever he tried to speak lost his power to produce words, an impossible and unacceptable person who exercised great influence on Constantine. This man being the emperor's intimate, 'parakimomenos' (meaning sleeping in the same room with the emperor), had certain sexual affinities with him as Psellos relates (*Chronografia*, pp. 263-270). The 'parakimomenoi' who were always the Emperor's most intimate people, usually were eunuchs, but this was not the case with Voilas, who seemed to live a very active sexual life in the palace. Psellos is quite clear about his erotic affinities with Constantine, who for this reason offered to his lover whatever he desired in power, wealth and glory.

⁹⁶ He asks of the emperor-king to be seen in this royal attire by the emperor's mistress Alani. She seduces him but he feels repulsion for her at the very moment she is to kiss him and in true remorse for his action the narrator-jester, crowned like a King, starts crying and asking for forgiveness from the emperor. The emperor pities him and caressing his hump says: 'Why cannot two people become one? Why is the world full of multiples and division quotients, why can it not be just one person?' (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 183).



‘Η πολυχρησιμοποιημένη δερμάτινη φιγούρα τοῦ Καραγκιόζη
ποὺ ἔπαιζε ὁ Σπαθάρης τὰ τελευταῖα 20 χρόνια.

Karagiozis: A popular Punch-like character from the Greek Shadow Theatre

Bloom's blending takes place under the light of Molly's bedroom. This Zoe, just like Joyce's Zoe the whore who leads Bloom in Nighttown, trails the narrator through a hallucinatory phantasmagoria which raises the question of ambiguity of gender and identity once more.

Lying prostrate upon Zoe's marble gravestone, the narrator remarks: 'it was as if I had lost my legs. Lying on the marble grave I could only feel the upper part of my body' (p. 215). Fondling the bas-relief on the marble stone, he hallucinates. He thinks that he sees the figure of a Silenus, an ithyphallic mythological figure. The narrator stares at his horse-like bottom and his phallus which resembles that of an ass, an allusion to Bloom's similar metamorphosis in 'Circe'. He thinks that he sees the satyr, Marsyas, and Priapus and in a synaesthetic reaction he incorporates their grotesque characteristics through the transformation into the snake-plant.⁹⁷ At the end of this section, Ersi appears and seemingly brings the narrator back to reality, evoking his masculine identity through her admiration of his 'flower'.

Just as, in Joyce's comedy, the sublime is contrasted with the trivial or the corporeal for the sake of comic effect. In Pentzikis's grotesque, the body sustains the contrast between the perceptual and the conceptual. That is, he presents an impossible image which clashes with the habitual concept of the body, an image which is biologically impossible, outrageous, preposterous. Its extreme form is the reification of bodily and intellectual processes mostly represented in the narrator's figurative death and his resurrection in the form of a needle and thread in the hands of Mrs Ersi embroidering the new text. It is now the object encrusted on the living. Pentzikis presents the male author-to-be in the petrified

⁹⁷ All these figures share the features of being half-animal and representing male phallicism. Sileni were mythological figures which resembled satyrs and were related to Dionysus. As Kerényi relates, they 'were called in an ancient Peloponnesian dialect, Satyroi, "the full ones": a term descriptive of their "abundant" and therefore sexually excited condition'. Sileni were creatures 'with pointed ears, hooves and horse's tails, but in other respects in human-phallic shape, with snub-nosed faces and unruly manners', p.179. Marsyas was a mythological figure who, in animal guise, 'dared to compete with Apollon in music and was defeated and stripped of his shaggy hide', Kerényi, p. 179. Priapus, an ancient Greek god of male procreative power, who belonged to the group of phallic or half-animal tutors of the gods, which includes Sileni and satyrs according to Kerényi. pp. 175-177. K. Kerényi, *The Gods of the Greeks*, trans by Norman Cameron (London and New York: Thames and Hudson, 1951).

form of an object, Bergson's *homme-automate*, an organ with male properties in the hands of an authoress, namely Mrs Ersi. It is now the narrator who incorporates Ersi's rigidity and lack of life by his metamorphosis into an object in her hands. The needle and thread is the reversed image of Ersi's statue-like representation which like Galatea, Pygmalion's statue, functions as the lyric counterpart of the *homme-automate*, as Koestler remarks.⁹⁸ With Ersi's blood the needle will be animate. It is a blood transfusion out of which the dead artist-son will be resurrected anew, ready to write the new text. It is at the same time an allegorical regression to the maternal body which concludes all of the narrator's minor regressions or night journeys for the establishment of an identity. The identity of the androgynous artist-son is turned into the identity of an artist, procreator, father of his own work. In one of his last dreams, the narrator dreams that he is an author-father of his own literary creations, represented in the four children (p. 357) he allegedly has with his wife:

They were in flesh and bone, [...] although I recognized them and I named them as the anonymous person of the hotel or the fourth person, just as I referred to as Rodanos, Andreas Dimakoudis with whom I had spoken on the phone, the author Stavrakios Kosmas, whom I forgot to mention, but also in the pram were the third child and the fourth, a suckling, the needle and the thread. (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 361)⁹⁹

The narrator's last fantasy about his children as either early projections or identifications of himself, or the transformed members of his own body, recapitulates his allegory of the author giving birth to his own work, exemplified throughout the whole narrative. The basic metaphor of art-making and writing as giving birth is sustained by Ersi's bleeding, the water-like fluidity of which alludes to degenerative-regenerative phenomena related to text and language.

⁹⁸ A. Koestler, *The Act of Creation*, p. 47.

⁹⁹ Pentzikis published *Andreas Dimakoudis* under the pseudonym Stavrakios Kosmas.

4.4.c. Birth of Logos: Word games, Onomatopoeia

In Pentzikis, onomatopoeia is also linked with the corporeal side of parody, the parturition of Logos, the 'Newly-born' child, the word. His narrator undergoes the throes of birth in the Rabelaisian figure of the emperor's stuttering buffoon, Voilas/Karagiozis.

As the emperor's buffoon, the narrator assumes the grotesque body of Karagiozis. The particularity of this Karagiozis lies in his speech, and especially his difficulty with articulation. This perturbation of speech is also characteristic of the narrator when he has to speak before other people, particularly those with authority, such as the paternal figure of the Emperor.¹⁰⁰ As Karagiozis acts out his performance as a jester in the emperor's court, his stuttering is no longer conditioned by the pathological, but by the comic of the carnival, the stutterer being one of the most characteristic types of the grotesque performance. In Bakhtin's analysis, the stutterer's faltering, his attempt at articulation, has the characteristics of the throes of birth (*Rabelais*, p. 308). The Rabelaisian stutterer performs childbirth, whereas Pentzikis's buffoon undergoes a word birth. He changes the spelling of the words, but most of all he suffers the spasms and the throes of childbirth in his gullet: '[...] faltering and spitting out unarticulated voices, every now and then, as if my gullet was swallowing the meaning I was struggling to express [...]' (p. 181). In this scene, the comic effect on the Court is clear and provokes laughter. Joyce stages a similar parody of procreation through Mulligan's clownish performance. Mulligan, like Zeus, is going to give birth to a new artistic creation from his 'impregnated' head. In both cases the comic effect derives from a topographical turning upside down of the body's locations, namely the lower part replaces the upper part within the bodily hierarchy, in order to perform the delivery of the word.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ '[...] I lose track of my thoughts among people, when they stand powerful and sovereign before me, and apart from talking nonsense, my tongue gets tied and I end up almost speechless [...]' (*Kyria Ersi*, p. 176).

¹⁰¹ In this way, Bakhtin notes 'a highly spiritual act is degraded and uncrowned by the transfer to the material bodily level of childbirth, realistically represented. But thanks to the degradation the word is renewed; one might say reborn. [...] Here once more we have the logic of opposites, the contact of the upper and the lower level. We have also exaggeration: the symptoms produced by the stutterer's distress (tension of the eyes, sweat) are increased to such a

The degenerative and regenerative function suggested by this process supports onomatopoeia as the outcome of the collision of two or more contrasting frames of reference occurring in parody and comedy. Joyce's text is very rich in examples of all sorts, the 'pornophilosophical philotheology' being a case in point. Such is the proliferating effect of the comic upheld by the rich material substratum of emotion as developed in our second chapter.

The process of delivery of the word, however, assimilates cosmic phenomena and highlights the writing subject's attempt to unite itself with the world. Such is the effect of the exploitation of the musicality of wine-dark sea by Stephen in 'Proteus.' The writing of his poem followed by his urination suggests a mental, emotional and physical release which anticipates Shem's urinal ink. In Pentzikis's *Kyria Ersi*, the text is written with the virginal-maternal blood of Ersi. The fluidity of the body's liquids affects the dissolution of the plot, rendering text, language and the word in liquefaction.¹⁰² Accordingly, writing and articulation of voice are inextricably associated with bodily functions, particularly those which stand on the borderline separating the body from the world. The bodily excretions, waste and fecund material bring the subject close to the world and its cosmic origins.¹⁰³ Bodily material is turned into writing material. Consider also Pentzikis's word game on the name of Joyce, whose art he understood as 'emptying his ego in about the same way as the ancient Egyptians emptied corpses in order to preserve the image, the dwelling place of Ka, [...] (p. 157):

degree as to typify childbirth. Thus the entire mechanism of the word is transferred from the apparatus of speech to the abdomen. [...] It reveals a great wealth and fullness of meaning, worked out to the smallest detail. It has at the same time a universal character; it is a miniature satirical drama of the word, of its material birth, or the drama of the body giving birth to the word' (*Rabelais*, p. 309).

¹⁰² Stephen's writing on the seashore, Bloom's, as he tries to write his identity on the sand, and Molly's nocturnal monologue are all acts of self transcendence accompanied by bodily excretions. Stephen urinates, Bloom ejaculates and Molly menstruates, functions which correspond to each one's fictional role as son, father and mother, respectively.

¹⁰³ As Bakhtin notes, 'Man assimilated the cosmic elements: earth, water, air and fire; he discovered them and became vividly conscious of them in his own body. He became aware of the cosmos within them. [...] We must stress here that it was through the material aspects and eliminations of the body - eating drinking, defecation, sexual life - that man found and retraced within himself the earth, sea, air, fire and all the cosmic matter and its manifestation and was thus able to assimilate them. Indeed the images of the material bodily lower stratum have a prevailing cosmic connotation' (*Rabelais*, p. 336).

The young man sincerely admired Joyce. Next summer, then, I took revenge by offering free lemonades made from synthetic juice, in tin boxes on which was written in the American language: 'LemonJoyce', 'drink everyone, lemonjuice' I shouted, advertising the glasses I was preparing.¹⁰⁴

The blood of Mrs Ersi has all those cosmic dimensions of a macrocosm diminished to a microcosmic level, namely a human body. Her blood is both a bodily waste like Molly's menstrual blood and the regenerative element for the narrator's human restoration.¹⁰⁵ The bleeding comprises both death and birth, the first blood shed on earth being Abel's blood out of which the earth was fertilized.¹⁰⁶

One could say that onomatopoeia in both Pentzikis and Joyce has a bodily substratum. The grotesque bodily images and their transformation affect the function of language. Such is the effect of Ruit Horas, his weird name-formation being accompanied by his grotesque appearance. Ruit Horas, as already mentioned, is Mr Time, Proteus as well as evil. The deformities (p. 52) and metamorphoses (pp. 134-8) he suffers all maintain the characteristics of the double or androgynous body as his comparison to Lamia and Medusa suggest.¹⁰⁷ This grotesque contrivance, which represents a human caricature, also introduces the grotesque in word-formation, its name reflecting the grotesque bodily deformities.¹⁰⁸ In the grotesque body we have displacements of organs and of functions. Similarly in the word game we encounter a displacement or interchange of functions, namely between the visual and the auditory-vocal function of the word. A misspelling like myti-mitos is a disruption of

¹⁰⁴ Pentzikis, *I Architektoniki tis Skorpias Zoes*, p. 59. We know that Pentzikis's contribution to U's translation was not actually in the use of English in which his level was poor, but in the particular etymological origins of the words and the play which could be produced by their sonic articulation. About this contribution of Pentzikis, see Kouroudis's *To Periodiko 'Kochlias'*, p. 46.

¹⁰⁵ This cosmic dimension has been thoroughly discussed in the second part of this thesis, in the section on 'the scene of writing', in association with Stephen's urination and the wine dark sea which anticipates Molly's menstrual blood.

¹⁰⁶ Pantagruel's birth causes his mother's death; similarly the narrator wonders if he killed Mrs Ersi by piercing her finger (p. 340). It is also with Rabelais that we find the turning of the body, particularly the female genitals, into other material, namely building material for the construction of the walls of the city, according to Panurge's project (Bakhtin, *Rabelais*, p. 313).

¹⁰⁷ Lamia is a figure of folklore tradition, particularly fairy-tales. Lamia or Lamo means the devouring one from the word 'laimos' meaning gullet. See Kerényi, *The Gods of the Greeks*, pp. 37-40. Lamia, in Aristophanes' *Pax* is an androgynous figure with phallus like Gorgo; she had the ability to change figure and shape and she could pluck out her eyes when she fell asleep in order to be able to see all the time. Lamia is the female Proteus of folk culture as maintained through legend and fairy tales which were the basic sources for Pentzikis's grotesque images.

¹⁰⁸ The name Ruit Horas itself is a portmanteau construction with a riddle character; 'ruit' in Latin means 'running' but it also has a sonic allusion to the English 'ruin'. Horas is 'time' but with a sonic correspondence to the word

the visual image of the word. Similarly the wrong syllabification damages the visual configuration of the word as a functional whole, simultaneously changing its meaning. In the class of wrong syllabification or misspelling we present a characteristic example of Pentzikis's humour and witticism very close to Joyce's. In the very beginning of her journey Ersi hears a noise which she assumes to be made by the bus door. She associates the sound with the algebraic divisions of the musical scale whose representation she compares with the electrical cables supported by posts which she takes as the five lines of the musical stave. The birds sitting on the wires seem to her like notes. She recalls the musical notes 'mi – fa – sol – la – si' and she thinks: Mi fas ola si, meaning 'don't eat everything, you, don't eat (mi fas). Don't eat. How can I leave without a bite of bread?' (p. 85). The word play recalls Molly's ignorance expressed in the 'met him pike hoses' mis-syllabification of the word 'metempsychosis'.

The construction of the word-play, then, relates to the undoing-redoing process already discussed throughout Pentzikis's and Joyce's work. Language retraces its steps backwards towards its minimal sound units or the etymological origins of the word, as in the case of Ruit Horas (Ruit meaning running in latin and Hora meaning time), and reincorporates their meaning in a new synthesis on the basis of sound.¹⁰⁹ In all cases the process to be followed demands an analytic undoing and a synthetic redoing.

Although Pentzikis's onomatopoeia may not match the scale of U, it is presumably created under the impact of Joyce's work. Pentzikis's punning in *Semeioseis Ekaton Imeron*, a book which is based on *Synaxaristis* (a compendium of the lives of Saints) is substantial evidence. The text deals with the myth of genesis in a synthetic game of religion, myth, science and everydayness; it is composed of scattered notes and thoughts echoing the

'chora' meaning country in Greek. As Horas represents the foreign influences upon Greece, his impact is disastrous either as the running of, or as the ruining caused by, the passage of time.

¹⁰⁹ Such is the effect of Ruit Horas's name, which has historical and social implications and derives from a combination of Latin and English, or the transformation of Joyce's name into LemonJuice.

fragmented world of *FW*.¹¹⁰ The names of the three main characters are compound words and puns. They hark back to Joyce's characters. The father is called Posnatonpum (Whatshisname) which is a close Greek translation of one of HCE's names, 'Howdoyoucallem' (*FW*, 94.34). The meaning of this lexical construction directly alludes to the vague identity of the father in *FW*, also called Here Comes Everybody.¹¹¹ The mother is called Hamenmoliv which, in English, means 'A Lost Pencil'. The initials of her name, translated into English, are ALP, Anna Livia Plurabelle, HCE's wife, who is associated with the act of writing through the unreadable or lost letter she has written in defence of HCE.¹¹² Hamenmoliv's name is also an allusion to Shem the Penman who has possibly written the letter under the dictation of ALP. The young Aoos, the son, is also called Oos (Ωος - ωον) which means egg in Greek, an allusion to HCE's procreative characteristic, who is 'the shell of the Cosmic Egg' which has been shattered' by his fall.¹¹³ Or in Joyce's words 'if Humpty shell fall frumpty [...] there'll be iggs for the brekkers come to mournhim, sunny side up with care' (*FW*, 12. 12-15). Aoos, as the consubstantial son of Posnatonpum Hamenmoliv, (p. 104) wants to become a wise scientist who, like Isis, will gather the dismembered parts of Osiris's body. The Osiris and Isis story recurs in *FW* (26.17, 105.29, 470.13, 15-20, 486.24, 493.28) and supports its key theme according to which, in a communion feast, the substance of the All-Father is served by All-Mother to the universal company.¹¹⁴ Aoos thinks of Isis as a mother and Osiris as a father and identifies them with his own parents (p. 105). His characterization as offspring and egg - Aoos is explicitly described as an egg (pp. 78, 82, 186, 199) - alludes to Joyce's 'the farmer, his son and their homely codes, known as

¹¹⁰ Pentzikis explicitly refers to Joyce and Ireland (pp. 253-4).

¹¹¹ Posnatonpum often wonders who he is. He is identified with early forms of life such as the sea-cucumber and suffers from sleepiness and the eternal guilt of the original Fall (pp. 159-61), like the paternal figure of *FW*. Pentzikis refers to Posnatonpum's fall (p. 160) and wake (p. 184). In Pentzikis, *Semeioseis Ekaton Imeron* (Salonica: Paratiritis, 1988).

¹¹² Joseph Campbell and Henry Morton Robinson, *A Skeleton Key to Finnegans Wake*, (London: Faber and Faber, New York: Harcourt Brace, 1944), pp. 85-92.

¹¹³ *ibid*, p. 14.

¹¹⁴ *ibid*, p. 40. In *Semeioseis Ekaton Imeron*, Pentzikis explicitly refers to the death of the Father (p. 81) and his dismemberment (p. 87) as well as to his aquatic nature (pp. 31, 96), an allusion to the 'brontoichthyan' nature of

eggburst, eggblend, eggburial and hatch-as-hatch can' (*FW*, 614.31-33). Aoos is also a river, as he says (p. 104), or in Pentzikis's words, 'Oos and Egg, a river' (p. 177). As Pentzikis explicitly identifies Aoos with his mother (p. 181), it becomes obvious that this is another allusion to *FW*, in which ALP is the river representing the origins of all life and language.

4.5. Conclusion

Written in the light of Joyce's *U*, Pentzikis's updating of D's text aspires to emulate Joyce's work with the epic. He assimilated certain thematic motifs which fitted his own perspectives of art-making as the inner adventure of modern man, an ordeal which takes place as an all-encompassing phenomenon of the human being. The circular quest and the archetype of the questing voyager, the incestuous family romance and the quest romance, the dream and the archetype of metamorphosis are the prevailing thematic structures employed by Pentzikis in his undoing of a novel with Parnassian characteristics. In updating D's novel, Pentzikis subverted the whole legacy of the realist novel. By employing modernist and avant-garde techniques, namely interior monologue, shifting of perspective, Freudian free association and analysis of the dream-work, and the techniques of collage and montage, Pentzikis's text broke with the linear narration of the realist novel and enacted a cubistic, multi-perspectival presentation of reality, which revealed the microstructure of life underlying the surface of fact.

The death-rebirth motif held by mystical doctrines and the concept of the consubstantiality of the Trinity are the theoretical framework of Pentzikis's allegory of art. He employs the body and certain psycho-physiological functions as well as certain natural phenomena from the world of fauna and flora to deck out his metaphysics scientifically. For him, like Joyce, science can be another relative discourse within the work of art.

HCE, which makes him food for the clan, or alludes to the fish symbol of Christ, whose flesh is the food of the

In Pentzikis's reversal of D's *Ersi* the trivia mock the ideal and the corporeal counteracts the lofty. Employing the body and its functions, desire and sexuality, gender shifting and modern problems of identity, Pentzikis establishes his allegory of art through an amalgamation of identities and ideas. He creates the multivalent perspective of his narrative, the ambiguity of meaning and identity expressed in the grotesque images of his narrative. The grotesque determines narrative and language, textual aberrations and onomatopoeic linguistic games sustaining the polyglotic, polyphonic character of his work. Pentzikis's adaptation of Joyce's modernistic venture, mixed with divergent theories and his own theological predisposition, led to *Kyria Ersi*, a text with paradigmatic modernist techniques for modern Greek literature.

CHAPTER FIVE

Chapter Five: Giorgos Cheimonas (1938-2000)¹

5.1 The Joycean Aftermath

The story I narrate is of a natural, incipient, amorphous human universe, which contracts and expands, as much in its macrocosm as in its microcosm - a story of incarnation [...] which has always been with us: a universal consciousness - ether, which once was named emmanuel.²

Cheimonas

Cheimonas is a successor of the modernist enterprise. In line with Pentzikis's ironic undoing of the literary tradition he is associated with Joyce through his exhaustive exploitation of the body in his texts. His elliptical prose is dense with allegories which dramatize the symbolic function of language. His short narratives are written in a mode of free association, deliberately inconsistent, which violates syntax and grammar. Pursuing the revelation of the voice of the body, instinct and senses, this deconstruction aims at exploring the phonological and grammatological possibilities of language. The whole of his work explores the coexistence of body and language within narrative in an overall deconstruction of writing that jeopardizes the novel as genre, and language as an institution of signification. The focus on the inner adventure of man in a world where language and civilization have superimposed presumptive meanings and values upon him is the core of Cheimonas's enterprise. His work arises from an abstruse theoretical background in which phenomenology, psychoanalysis, psychosomatic medicine and linguistics are entwined with the French nouveau roman, Beckett's antinovel and the theatre of the absurd.

¹ Giorgos Cheimonas was born in Kavala in 1938. He studied medicine in Salonica and Athens, where he finally settled in 1962. He did his doctoral thesis in Paris where he specialized in neuro-psychology.

² Giorgos Cheimonas, *Exi Mathimata gia ton Logo* (Athens: Ipsilon, 1984), p. 105, hereafter cited as *Exi Mathemata*. Cheimonas uses the lowercase letter e for the name Emmanuel possibly to signify that God is a human fantasy, as his whole project suggests.

Recent Greek criticism has linked Cheimonas's preoccupation with language and the body to Joyce's work. Aristinos finds this in the subversive character of Cheimonas's narratives, which break with the tradition of the bourgeois novel, and in his exhaustive language play which conveys multiplicity of signification.³ Aristinos's analysis highlights the theme of the body as subject-matter in Cheimonas. Polysemy and ambiguity bring him close to Joyce. His texts are the convergence of manifold ideas, a collage of sometimes conflicting theoretical approaches to language. Without sharing philosophical ground with Joyce, Cheimonas handles language and the body through all those literary motifs and thematic structures encountered in Joyce, Xefloudas and Pentzikis: the journey toward selfhood and otherness, the theme of the hero as an outcast; the incest motif sustaining the genesis of Logos and death and birth in language; all are embedded in a dense philosophical and psychoanalytic background. Cheimonas rewrites these motifs in a style which subverts linear narrative and normative language, deciphers its highly symbolic and conceptual character, and aims at restoring the direct and primitive contact of man with the world and his own body. Or as he puts it, 'the terrifying demand which is posed by art is for man to be comprehensible to his World'.⁴ His texts echo Freud, Lacan, Bataille, Blanchot, Merleau-Ponty, Derrida and Kristeva. Either as a psychiatrist, or through his engagement with the literary current of his time as a student of medicine in Paris, Cheimonas's work bears this theoretical legacy.⁵ The common philosophical ground of the two authors seems to be ancient Greek philosophy and literature, and Nietzsche, although Cheimonas never states clearly his intertextual indebtedness.

Because of their fragmentariness and inconsistency, his texts have been considered incomprehensible, ambiguous and enigmatic.⁶ Phenomenology, however, helps explain

³ Giorgis Aristinos, *Eisagogi stin Pezografia tou G. Cheimona* (Athens: Kedros, 1981). See also Evangelos K. Valsamidis, 'G. Cheimonas – J. Joyce: Mikromakrokosmoi tis Afigisis', *Odos Panos*, 109 (2000), 114-118.

⁴ Giorgos Cheimonas, *Exi Mathemata*, p. 122.

⁵ Cheimonas shares with Joyce the background of studies in science.

⁶ See Giorgis Aristinos, *Eisagogi stin Pezografia tou G. Cheimona*, P. Moullas, 'Mia Tolmiri Prosfora - I Ekdromi tou Giorgou Cheimona', *Epoches*, 16 (1964), 72-73.

Cheimonas's language theories, along with neo-Freudian psychoanalytic thought (Lacan and Kristeva), and neuro-physiology, while his deconstruction of language and narrative echoes Derrida.⁷ Cheimonas's textual ambivalence is comparable to and, as will be seen, has been developed in dialogue with, Joyce's *U* and *FW*. If Joyce, with his 'jocoserious' art of subversion, his comedy of and on aesthetics, his anti-theological derision of Logos, shook the foundations of logocentric tradition, Cheimonas, in deadly seriousness and with the detached eye of a scientist-philosopher, walks the same precarious tightrope. Plotless and characterless, with a language violated in all its conceptual and conventional construction, Cheimonas's texts deal with the enclosure of an inner self which no longer communicates, cast out from society and civilization and struggling to discover a mode of existence within the world. Both body and language sustain these processes, showing the existential impasses of the modern individual in terms of a Beckettian excess. Beckett, as is well known, overlaps with Joyce in many ways, including language play and the body.⁸ Violated, dismembered and disfigured bodies coexist with the malformations in language, the abnormalities in syntax and punctuation. Cheimonas's intentionally violated narratives highlight those silences of language which, caused by syntactical and grammatical abnormalities, aim at questioning meaning and signification. This elliptical style reveals the 'gestural meaning' immanent in the word and relating to the body.⁹ In the main, a sort of pathology, permeating the texture of the narrative, is rendered in a grotesque style which uproots all vestiges of familiarity and borders on the uncanny. Probing the self where individuality and concrete events have been replaced by basic patterns of universal

⁷ Derrida has also a very close relation with the phenomenology of Heidegger and Husserl. His first major publication was his critical introduction to a translation of Husserl's *The Origin of Geometry*, 1962.

⁸ Ellmann, *JJ*, p. 661, Martin Esslin, *The Theatre of the Absurd* (London: Penguin, 1991), pp. 29-35. See also Beckett's 'Dante... Bruno. Vico... Joyce', in *Our Exagmination round his Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress* (Paris: Shakespeare & Co., 1929), pp. 3-22 (p. 13).

⁹ Merleau-Ponty's 'gestural meaning' refers to the thought which is unsuspected by intellectualism. This concept is very close to the unconscious functioning in the instinctual vibration of the body, although it transcends the dual distinction conscious-unconscious, recognizing the existence of the one within the other and meaning as an all-encompassing phenomenon throughout the body's stratified hierarchy. See M. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. by Colin Smith (London: Routledge, 1962), p. 179.

significance, Cheimonas's texts evade any representative and mimetic function, break the linearity of narrative, and attempt to explore the possibilities of language in the deepest strata of its origins relating to the body. In this sense his texts belong to the vast tradition which *FW* initiated, and which flourished in France in authors such as Beckett and Philippe Sollers or was discussed by theorists such as Lacan, Kristeva and Derrida.¹⁰

5.2. The Theoretical Background: Language and the Body

Cheimonas's theories shed light on his literary texts.¹¹ Phenomenology, particularly Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception, and psychosomatic medicine are central to his essays.¹² Phenomenology is the philosophy 'for which the world is "always there" before reflection begins - as an inalienable presence; and all its efforts are concentrated upon re-achieving direct and primitive contact with the world, and endowing this contact with a philosophical status' to use the words of Merleau-Ponty (1962, p. vii), a theorist whom Cheimonas associates with the bodily substratum of Logos.¹³ Phenomenology focuses on language as the domain where this reciprocal relationship of the body with the world has been distortedly perceived. And it is through speech and sound that we can discover this mutual relationship between the body and the world, as its perturbed

¹⁰ Cheimonas is conversant with the French psychoanalytic and philosophical tradition. He attended Lacan's seminars in 1964. See Mikela Chartoulari, 'Giorgos Cheimonas: O Synchronos Anthropos den Ekpempei Semata', *Ta Nea*, 22 May 1999, p. 26.

¹¹ Cheimonas was a psychiatrist and has written essays on the phenomenology of logos. His thesis was on 'Conscience, Langage et Aphasie', University of Paris, 1966. Aristinos claims that Cheimonas's theories can explain his literary 'techniques and style' (*Eisagogi stin Pezografia tou G. Cheimona*, p. 83).

¹² Merleau-Ponty's constant target was Cartesianism. Drawing on Husserl's notion of the pre-predicative intentionality and on Heidegger's exposition of human existence as being-in-the-world, he developed a description of the world as a field of experience whereby I find myself. His *Phenomenology of Perception* established him as the pre-eminent philosopher of the body, as neither subject nor object but as an ambiguous mode of existence that infects all knowledge. *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 554.

¹³ See Cheimonas, 'Phenomenologia tou Logou' in *Exi Mathemata*, p. 19. The phenomenology of perception mainly focuses on the issues of body and language; it claims that: 'the permanence of one's own body, if only classical psychology had analysed it, might have led it to the body no longer conceived as an object of the world, but as our means of communication with it, to the world no longer conceived as a collection of determinate objects, but as the horizon latent in all our experience and itself ever-present and anterior to every determining thought.' (*Phenomenology of Perception*, p. 92).

operation, in aphasia, has proved.¹⁴ Phenomenology holds that ‘It is through my body that I understand other people just as it is through my body that I perceive “things”’ (p. 186); speech is neither the ‘sign’ of thought nor the envelope and clothing of thought. ‘Speech and thought are intervolved, the sense being held within the word and the word being the external existence of sense’ (p. 182). As Merleau-Ponty phrases it,

We live in a world where speech is an institution. For all these many commonplace utterances, we possess within ourselves ready-made meanings. They arouse in us only second order thoughts; these in turn are translated into other words which demand from us no real effort of expression and will demand from our hearers no effort of comprehension. [...] The linguistic and intersubjective world no longer surprises us, we no longer distinguish it from the world itself, and it is within a world already spoken and speaking that we think. [...] Our view of man will remain superficial so long as we fail to go back to that origin, so long as we fail to find beneath the chatter of words, the primordial silence, as long as we do not describe the action which breaks this silence. The spoken word is a gesture, and its meaning a word. (My emphasis, *Phenomenology of Perception*, p. 184)

Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of perception holds that all language and speech has meaning and signification. This idea resonates in Cheimonas’s language theories and literary texts. Signification neither derives from mere cognitive processes nor from the ‘verbal image’ deposited in memory by experience. Merleau-Ponty recognizes a gestural or existential significance in speech which inhabits the meaning of the word at the stage of its coming into being, i.e. the speaking word in contrast to the spoken word which provides the available significance.¹⁵ This function of language, as the subject opens up with its body to the world, denies the conceptual and delimiting meaning of the word and summons forth the gestural sense which discloses itself in ‘a stratification of powers relatively capable of being isolated’ (p. 195), encompassing both intelligence and motor phenomena (motility), that is

¹⁴ See ‘Phenomenologia tou Logou’ in *Exi Mathemata*, p. 35. Aphasia, according to Cheimonas, is the disarticulation of the conscious present. It represents a perturbation in Logos. It appears in utterance and reception of logos, motor aphasia or sensory. It has both organic and psychological origins.

¹⁵ ‘The link between the word and its living meaning is not an external link of association, the meaning inhabits the word, and “language is not an external accompaniment to intellectual processes (Gelb and Goldstein, 158)” (*Phenomenology of Perception*, p. 193).

the whole hierarchy of the human body.¹⁶ Thus language 'is no longer an instrument, no longer a means; it is a manifestation, a revelation of intimate being and of the psychic link which unites us to the world and our fellow men'.¹⁷ The phenomenology of perception denies the subject-object dichotomy and views man as a whole.

Cheimonas rejects the metaphysics of the logocentric tradition according to which all our understanding of the world comes through ideas behind which stands God, 'as the rational author of our *de facto* situation'.¹⁸ Cheimonas's words accord with Merleau-Ponty's idea that 'man comes into a world that is not a world of things, but a world of words' (*Exi Mathemata*, p. 31). This also echoes Lacan's idea that the subject inscribes himself in culture through language and it is the world of words that creates the world of things, the order that the subject enters as it comes to terms with language, the symbolic order relating to the Father.¹⁹ This assumption, though, also deriving from a phenomenological background, does not group Cheimonas with Lacanian psychoanalysis. In fact, it will become clear that he does not commit himself to closed theoretical systems and his scientific background moves beyond metapsychology, and towards a convergence of different fields of modern epistemology, such as Koestler's theories. Aristinos coins the neologism 'Biosophy' to characterize this amalgamation of philosophical, psychoanalytic and scientific fields encountered in Cheimonas's literary texts.²⁰

For Cheimonas, language-logos is symbiotic with a sort of pathology rooted in the nature of language itself:

¹⁶ The same term reappears in Kristeva's analysis of language and is related to the semiotic activity, a process which is contrasted to the symbolic, and relates to the body's drives, instinctual impulses, bodily rhythm and so on, associated with the unconscious.

¹⁷ Goldstein, *L'Analyse de l'Aphasie et l'Essence du Langage*, p. 496, quoted from Merleau-Ponty, p. 196.

¹⁸ Merleau-Ponty, in discussing the Cartesian cogito, p. 199.

¹⁹ In Lacan's words, 'Man speaks, then, but it is because the symbol has made him man' or 'language allows him to regard himself as the scene-shifter, or even the director of the entire imaginary capture of which he would otherwise be nothing more than a living marionette', in Jacques Lacan *Écrits*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (London: Routledge, and New York: Norton, 1977), pp. 64, 272.

²⁰ Aristinos also finds associative links between the scientific spirit of Cheimonas and that of Koestler. See *Eisagogi sti Pezografia tou G. Cheimona*, pp. 54 and 65.

I believe that two important things are valid to logos: the first, which at full length and more than everything else, activates and preserves speech in its biopsychological axis, has an impetus genuinely psychological, which I would call the function of signification, inherent in the function of naming; secondly I believe that the natural character of language is para-aphasiac.²¹

In his analysis of language, Cheimonas keeps close to phenomenology's premise that speech is the operation whereby the psychological and psychosomatic signification of all language can be more easily revealed, through the motility involved in the language of the speaking subject as it experiences the world, things and people. He draws his examples for the ordinary functioning of speech from its violated expression, in clinical phenomena such as aphasia, whereby the linguistic disturbances can give an ample account of the whole functioning of language itself, when consciousness is unrestrained:

Man's history is the story of his logos; man is to logos, what bird is to flight and scorpion is to poison. [...] What exactly is logos or word? What existed before and beneath their completion? In sequence we will see the clear quality of logos, that is as a function of consciousness, and we will try from this viewpoint to see its negation: aphasia. Although we will always be in danger as we will use words to speak about words.²²

In aphasia the premise (especially that, as Jackson claimed) of speech is also damaged, and this could be taken as a rupture of logos leading to the depth of the psycho-intellectual crypts: we know that the rules of grammar and syntax do not operate as merely technical formulas of combinations of signs, as simple and well known linguistic rules: the order and the law of a sentence is the order and the law of the rational psyche, the tense of the verb is the time of the consciousness, the verb shows the consciousness, the subject and object are given existential beings; the predicate is sensory.²³

²¹ Para-aphasia (as a term of neuropsychology) is the pathological use of one word instead of another, see 'I Aphasiki i Psychotiki Omilia', *Exi Mathemata*, p. 83.

²² 'Phenomenologia tou Logou', *Exi Mathemata*, pp. 13-14.

²³ 'Engefalos ke Logos', *Exi Mathemata*, p. 66. See also Aristinos, *Eisagogi stin Pezografia tou G. Cheimona*: 'the unity of signifier-signified is disintegrated, the signifier does not correspond to anything signified, it is lost, or detached from significance, diluted as it is regurgitated in its phonemes' (p. 81). Pathology and malignancy in Logos stand as the fundamental examples whereby conceptual and conventional language have superimposed given meanings upon man, blocking the inner processes relating to the body.

Cheimonas employs Jackson's and Goldstein's theories about the internal and sonic logos to articulate his own concept of language and being. For Cheimonas, language-logos coincides with the process of becoming of the individual within the presence of consciousness-Logos, and is amenable to the perpetual reflections of this becoming.

[...] The internal [logos] is anterior to, or follows, the sonic [Goldstein]. The internal logos, without the limiting and definitive formations of the sonic, deftly operates with a multitude of ideo-lexical unities [...] and it is a vigilant, self-recognizing consciousness. At the slightest loosening [of consciousness], the word empties, the syllables are confused, the idea which is incarnated and instructive to the speech becomes opaque and is scattered in accidental connotations - the main virtues of logos, which are accuracy and clarity, are lost, silence comes: logos is disarticulated and pauses till it re-applies with consciousness. This application of consciousness and logos appears more in the gaps of the latter than in its regular and normative utterance. (*Exi Mathemata*, p. 31)

For Cheimonas, understanding man's nature is inextricably related to the subversion of the codes of rational speech. The 'gaps' of logos in the state of unrestrained consciousness reveal the reality hidden behind normative logos. As the field of his research is aphasia in language, the negativity of logos, he derives from it the signs of the disturbed or pathologically suffering psychology of man, either masked under conventional utterance or liberated by disfigured or malformed discourse.

Cheimonas heralds negativity in language by deciphering its codes and symbols. This is not far from a willful liberation of the language of the unconscious which borders on aphasia. He subverts normative language to show the distorted effects of logocentricity on human nature and to make art speak in a 'somatic logos'²⁴: instinctual vibrations, bodily and psychosomatic disturbances, and mythical savagery. Employing all the elements that civilization and convention have put aside from man's life, he is not going to speak in

²⁴ G. Cheimonas, *I Dysthymi Anagennisi, Ogdoo Mathema gia ton Logo* (Athens: Ipsilon, 1987), p. 75, hereafter cited *Dysthymi*

aphasia, but he intends to use it as an instrument and channel it towards reality.²⁵ This willful style of Cheimonas brings him close to Beckett and to the theatre of the absurd. His use of aphasic language recalls Beckett's use of schizophrenic symptoms in *Watt*. Thus Cheimonas's paradoxical endeavour takes him beyond the psychoanalytic dichotomy of conscious-unconscious, particularly in its schematic borderlines between normative and abnormal language, as in Lacanian metapsychology. Like Joyce, he sees this operation of language as an all-encompassing phenomenon, unfolding at all levels of the human hierarchy. Cheimonas envisages an all-encompassing logos, very close to the Joycean 'all in all' or as he puts it, '*Because in my books, nothing is permitted to be found outside of Man, outside of the body of Man - and when necessary, the order is violated in order to encompass in them the whole world*'.²⁶ He says:

- a. I have in my mind a large written logos; not *grandiose*, but spacious, which will encompass [everything]. It is a liberated logos which often overflows its subject-matter and its meaning to the extent of erasure; however, there is always and incontestably a meaning in it, following and permitting.
- b. It is also a last logos, conclusive. I do not mean that a logos dies and atrophies; but I mean a final logos which tends to its closure through mineral words and through a geological syntax.²⁷

Cheimonas's prodigal syntax and word formation, based upon the exploitation of aphasic or psychotic language, is comparable to, and possibly influenced by, Joyce's language in *FW*, which also exploits the non-normative operations of language by using the language of dreams, even if Cheimonas cannot emulate *FW*. Cheimonas's ingestion of a vast literary tradition is also comparable to Joyce's by way of its subversive and all-absorbing bias. This ingestion extends from Nietzsche, to Beckett's deployment of the absurd, and to Derrida's tympanization of philosophy. More to the point, the two authors overlap in their

²⁵ See Aristinos's opinion that aphasic language is part of Cheimonas's aesthetics. As he claims, the essential and hidden logos springs from the aphasic language which is unquestionably disorganized, fragmented, onomatopoeic and idiolectal and has the element of surprise, *Eisagogi stin Pezografia tou G. Cheimona*, p. 84.

²⁶ Author's emphasis, 'Mia Eisigisi', in *Exi Mathemata*, p. 115.

²⁷ 'O Megalos Logos', in *Exi Mathemata*, p. 97.

preoccupation with the sound of the word, and in their preference for the spoken rather than the written word, although for seemingly different reasons. The common ground of this preoccupation with the sound is the subversion of theological logos which has become flesh. Although Joyce seems to be less committed to theories than Cheimonas, who supports his language-play with phenomenology, psychoanalysis and psychosomatic medicine, the two authors share the motifs of incest and of the androgynous artist.

Cheimonas also employs a holarchy, a mutual relationship of the part with the whole. Like Joyce, he intermingles science and philosophy with his literary work. *O Giatros Ineotis* is an example of organization combining the scientific with the philosophical and the psychological. As the author himself says:

Especially in this text there is a lonely person [...]. This person, the hero of the story, converses with the mob, confronts it, precedes or follows it - these are paradoxical repetitions: and herein lodges the amphibious form part-hero and whole-mob functioning as the part and the whole for logos, the part, as section and epiphany of the whole, the whole, as receptacle of the part, exists by dint of the part, it is whole exclusively due to its relation to the part; it also repeats the occurrence of the individual consciousness as a result of its cut-off from the world and as a factor of this cut-off. [...] This person undertakes, on the mob's account, to uphold the meaning of the text, [...]: the mob has no logos, it is there to listen to him who speaks, speaks to it, and the mob by hearing this logos makes it everyday logos - common is the logos which radiates the acerbity of its demand to be heard, it is most of all audible. (My emphases, *Dysthymi*, p. 64)

The part-hero and the whole-mob introduce a philosophical overtone concerning the *hierarchy* of a whole, an order (determined by the fields of science and reason - logocentrism) to which the being is subjected. Cheimonas considers this text as a spiral constituted by six concentric helixes. His conception of it as a spiral draws upon Joyce's Thomist aesthetics of the relation of the part with the whole, and the circular construction of

FW as seen by theorists such as Eco and Derrida.²⁸ However, Cheimonas's approach also derives from phenomenology. In Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, the normal experience is described as involving "circles" or "vortices" within which each element is representative of all others and carries, as it were, "vectors" which link it to them' (p. 191).²⁹ This conception is comparable to the helical structure of the whole and its partition to the *holons* in Koestler's theory.³⁰ The violation of their relationship causes pathological phenomena, with the 'holons' running riot, as Koestler says. In *O Giatros Ineotis*, the violation of the whole comes through the piercing of the eardrum by the voice separated from the mob and inscribed on the body. The concentric and indefinitely circulating movement of the whole and the partitioning of the part, which also stand as metaphors for the helical construction of the ear, is the passage of the audible voice into the body, where the core story resides. The speaking voice reveals the meaning, residing in the human body, surfacing from and submerging into the body, in vortices, Joyce's 'soundwaves' which 'pinnatrate' the ear (*FW*, 69.26 and 310.9). They are represented in the Gypsy's wheel, upon which he sharpens the knives for the impending carnage of the people who stand for language itself. Cheimonas's metaphors bring together physiology, philosophy, and language, all written on the body.

Cheimonas employs a hierarchical structure only for the purpose of its violation; like a scientist-philosopher he tries to show the upshots of his experimentation in excessive or reductive samples. In his first book, *Peisistratos*, he clearly states this stratagem, which is a key-concept for his whole enterprise, in a theory announced as 'violated parallelism':

²⁸ Eco characterized *U* and *FW* as a world that 'is no longer a pyramid composed of continual transcendental displacements but a self-containing circle or spiral' (*The Aesthetics of Chaosmos*, p. 8). While Derrida in his essay 'The Tympan' discusses the impact of the voice in the spiralling ear of philosophy. See section 5.6. '*O Giatros Ineotis*' of this thesis.

²⁹ In cases of pathology, this life is enclosed in narrower limits, and compared to the normal subject's perceived world, it moves in more restricted circles, see Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, p. 192.

³⁰ Koestler coined the term 'holon' to suggest any sub-whole entity which belongs to the hierarchy of the whole. The holons are a stable, integrated structure, equipped with self-regulatory devices and enjoying a considerable degree of autonomy. Cells muscle, nerves, organs, and so on, are quasi-autonomous wholes. They are Janus-faced, the face turned upward toward the higher levels is that of the dependent part; the face turned downward, towards its own constituents, is that of a whole of remarkable self-sufficiency. See *Janus*, p. 27.

[...] The exhausting research of the most insipid detail, the mechanical repetition of words till they lose their meaning, the persistent viewing of a phenomenon to the extent that it loses its form and nature, and remains empty and soundless, the decay of a concept into its raw materials, all the eccentric feelings are well known to me. Once I was overwhelmed by a strong enthusiasm because looking at the decoration of an old vase I thought that I discovered a primitive, invisible symbolism of 'the universal principle of harmony'. Two lines whose parallel was not clear but violated as if by a secret pressure - I guessed in the course of the second line the action of an invisible and invincible power which pushed it to follow the course of the first line. Simultaneously, I was watching the resistance of the line (its stiffness) subject itself to a legitimate relation -: parallel - to the other. I baptized this representation 'violated parallelism', an ideogram representing 'the beginning of regularity'. (*Peisistratos*, p. 12) ³¹

For Cheimonas, negativity in language (e.g. aphasia) exemplifies the violation of the harmonious relationship of the part with the whole. This is not far from Joyce's wilful obscurity in *FW*, where the dream-work speaks in an inconsistent and incomprehensible manner, flaunting 'the surdity of it', the absurdity, 'Absurd bargain' (*FW*, 538.18, 19), and 'nonsense' (*FW*, 56.28) of the language of dreams. To speak for the human predicament, Cheimonas deploys the crudest and most uncanny aspects of its inner life, the rawest material of the body and human psyche which also stand as metaphors for language and narrative themselves. If in *U* Joyce wanted to parallel his writing with the functions of the living body, Cheimonas's writing would seek to prove that his writing, or even all writing, is nothing other than the body itself written down in terms of language. Cheimonas believes that language has brought humanity close to extinction by destroying true nature. Symbols have brought an end to life. The premise of literature is to reveal all those areas of human life which are buried under the 'ancient opulence of discourse'.³² In this perspective, in

³¹ cf. Kristeva: 'Polynomia is the index, the *ideogram* of biological and social orders. It is a kind of asymbolic memory of the body', *Desire in Language*, p. 111.

³² 'Mia Eisigisi', in *Exi Mathemata*, p. 114.

Cheimonas's work the undoing has a far greater momentum than the redoing, language and narrative being the fields par excellence of deconstruction.

As far as the syntax of my sentence is concerned, it is dictated by the strongest, in my opinion, law of language: let language be one with the living 'meaning' to follow at full length its autonomous motion. Because the constant displacements of meaning, pre-existing and outside language, have to follow language. The fate of language is to be besieged by signification. (*Exi Mathemata*, p. 114)

At the base of all this undoing resides the phenomenological concept of the significance of speech and sound in the unfolding of those bodily operations which lead to 'the psycho-intellectual crypts of man', or in Joyce's words the 'zounds of sounds' which lie 'buried' inside 'the dead giant manalive' (*FW*, 499.27, 500. 1-2).³³ The language of *FW* relates to the body by its heavy reliance upon the world of senses. As Joyce said, 'It is night. It is dark. You can hardly see. You sense rather'.³⁴ Cheimonas's language moves in the same direction. Just as sound was Joyce's choice for the building of his comedy of language (alliteration, punning, intonation, rhythm) and aesthetics, in Cheimonas also it is a subversive implement for all language in relation to the body.³⁵

My ambition is to make the sound of human logos audible. Hereafter an uncertain struggle begins about how it can be heard more clearly - and if I speak of sound it is because I consider my logos oral and not written. If in the form that my speech finally takes someone can recognize some poetic modes I accept that indifferently. Man's logos has to be *immoral*.³⁶ [It is] uninhibited in its choice and use of the necessary means in order to reach the most opportune utterance, but also the rotation of the image *par excellence*. (*Exi Mathemata*, pp. 114-5)

This amoral detour into language is variously exemplified in the texts: sentences start without capital letters, with uneven and awkward indentation of paragraphs which enhances

³³ 'Engefalos ke Logos', *Exi Mathemata*, p. 66.

³⁴ Jacques Mercanton, 'The Hours of James Joyce', in *Portraits of the Artist in Exile: Recollections of James Joyce by Europeans*, ed. Willard Potts (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1979), p. 233.

³⁵ On this absolute dependence on sound is built the erratic language of the *FW*, a book which is associated with the ear rather than the eye, as H.C. Earwicker's name suggests.

³⁶ This is an echo of Nietzsche's characterization of himself as the first immoralist, talking about his choice of the name Zarathustra, in *Ecce Homo*.

the blank spaces among them and in general with a typographical inconsistency, employed to depict graphically Cheimonas's perforated logos:

*I want to highlight, as I already have done elsewhere, the inconsistency of logos. I believe in a logos perforated by silences which organically intervene between the words, between the sentences. [...] These silences intervene like small language deaths: memory of the words which have been lost and expectation of their incarnation into the words that are about to be born. (Exi Mathemata, p. 115)*³⁷

To restore the primordial meaning of things and the world, an author has to have 'a linguistic empathy', 'the psycho-intellectual excitations of the heroes express the powerful linguistic excitation of the author'.³⁸ A Dionysian spirit smoulders in Cheimonas; it is very close to Nietzsche's later concept, where the 'Dionysian stands for the creative employment of the passions and the affirmation of life in spite of suffering'.³⁹ However, this in Cheimonas appears amalgamated with psychoanalytic thought and with psychosomatic medicine.

In his lecture on aphasic or psychotic language ('Aphasiki I Psychotiki Omilia'), analysing the relation between psychosis and aphasia, he writes: 'An adolescent, because of a tumour in his brain, has an aphasic syndrome, which, after the tumour has been removed, retreats and logos is restored but only for a psychotic disease to follow' (p. 91). This example shows the exact relation between body and language. Insofar as the patient's problem is exclusively somatic, we have a simple case of aphasia, that is perturbation in language and speech accompanied by cancer as a psychosomatic symptom; however as soon as the bodily problem is cured, the symbolic order enters and he goes mad. This clinical incident is not at all irrelevant to what Cheimonas attempts in his literary texts.

³⁷ See the typography of Cheimonas in illustration, on next page.

³⁸ 'Engefalos ke Logos', in *Exi Mathemata*, p. 58.

³⁹ The synthesis of the Dionysian, as originally conceived with the Apollonian, is contrasted with the Christian negation of life and extirpation of the passions. This concept appears in the *Twilight of the Idols*, written in 1888. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, trans. by W. Kaufman (New York: Vintage, 1967), p. 20, n. 5.

φθάσει στήν ὅσο γίνεται καίρια ἐκφορά, ἀλλά καί περιφορά, τῆς Μείζονος Εἰκόνας.

Θέλω νά τονίσω, ὅπως τό ἔχω κάνει καί ἄλλοῦ, τήν ἀσυνέχεια τοῦ λόγου. Πιστεύω σ' ἕναν λόγο διάτρητο ἀπό σιωπές πού παρεμβάλλονται ὀργανικά ἀνάμεσα στίς λέξεις, ἀνάμεσα στίς προτάσεις. Τήν στιγμή πού θά ἀναδυθεῖ ὀλοκληρωμένη ἡ λεκτική μορφή, ἀφάνισμένη ἀπό τήν ὑποτέλειά της στήν ἄλεκτη σημασία της, ἐκεῖνη τήν στιγμή γίνεται σιωπή. Εἶναι μικρά χαοτικά διαλείμματα ὅπου συντελοῦνται οἱ κρυφές ἐναρμονίσεις τῶν ἤχων τῶν λέξεων, ἐκεῖ διαγράφονται οἱ ἀστραπιαῖες τροχιές τῶν ἐννοιῶν —ἐκεῖ κυρίως ἐκτίθεται ἡ ἐκφραση καί μεθίσταται ἡ ἐννόηση. Παρεμβαίνουν, αὐτές οἱ σιωπές, σάν μικροί θάνατοι τῆς γλώσσας: μνήμη τῶν λέξεων πού χάθηκαν καί προσδοκία μετενσάρκωσής τους στίς λέξεις πού γεννιῶνται. Ἡ εἰκόνα πάλι, γιά τήν ὁποία μιῶ, πρέπει νά ἀποδίδει ὅ,τι ὀπτικό μπορεῖ νά φανερωθεῖ ἀπό τήν ἀνθρώπινη ὑπαρξη καί κατάσταση, καί ὑπακούει στούς ρυθμούς μιᾶς αἰσθητικῆς τῆς ἱστορίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων. Ἴσως, ὅ,τι συνιστᾷ τήν Ἴσχύ τοῦ λόγου, τήν ἀγωνία του, τό ἀνιστόρητο εἰκονικό του κατόρθωμα, εἶναι ἡ ἀπόστασή του ἀπό τήν κοινή, τήν «ὀπτική» εἰκόνα. Πῶς διανύει αὐτή τήν ἀπόσταση; Κάποτε, αὐτήν τήν εἰκόνα, τήν διατρέχει ἕνα σκοτεινό ὄνομα: Αἰτία, Αἵρεση, Ἀνάγκη. Δέν πρόκειται γιά προσωποποιήσεις μεσαιωνικοῦ θεάτρου, ἀλλά γιά ὄντα πραγματικά, εἶναι ἄνθρωποι-ἐννοιες. Γιατί στά βιβλία μου τίποτε δέν ἐπιτρέπεται νά βρῖσκεται ἔξω ἀπό τούς ἀνθρώπους, ἔξω ἀπό τά σώματα τῶν ἀνθρώπων —κι ὅταν χρειάζεται, ἡ τάξη παραβιάζεται γιά νά χωρέσει μέσα τους ὀλόκληρος ὁ κόσμος.

Οἱ τρεῖς αὐτές ὕλες (γλώσσα, εἰκόνα, ἐννοια) ἔχουν μιᾶ κίνηση σεληνιακή, πού εἶναι διαφορετική γιά τήν κάθε μιᾶ. Σπάνια συντονίζεται ὁ ρυθμός καί ἡ φορά τους: ἐκεῖ ὅπου ἡ ἐννοια σκληραίνει, ἡ εἰκόνα ἀναδιπλώνεται ἀργά καί εὐρύχωρα, κι ὁ λόγος ἀκίνητεῖ μέσα στίς παθητικές μετοχές τῶν ρημάτων.

ἡ σημερινή γραφή δέν φαίνεται νά ἔχει καμιά σχέση μέ ἐκεῖνη τοῦ περασμένου αἰῶνα. Μιά διαστι-

Since, for Cheimonas, language bears all the symptoms of man's estrangement, language (logos) becomes the patient in his texts. It is a language which is predestined to support the author's decision 'to start his conversation from the beginning with the things of the world' (p. 113). It has to convey all disturbance and distortion as the symptoms of that diseased body-language which is cured when the real bodily disease overwhelms the content of the text. When linguistic upheaval takes control in the narrative - a 'symptom' of the impenetrable symbolic order, to use Lacan's term, which traps bodily and instinctual drives within the limits of the signifier - the text loses consistency but characters and human bodies remain unscathed. This is the case in the incomprehensibility of *I Ekdromi*. The discourse is gradually regulated or cured of its perturbation and regains a structure, employing new forms of symbolism, when a violent thematization of body takes place within the narrative, the haemorrhage of the word has been replaced by the body. *O Giatros Ineotis*, with its structural schematization, is a case in point. And yet, as symbolism is the object par excellence negated by Cheimonas, his symbolization will be on the verge of symbolic order and semiotic activity (signs of the instinctual drives relating to the body), in Kristeva's terms. He leaves the text open to multi-interpretation or, in Blanchot's terms, to a limitless experience.

Cheimonas evades any commitment to French psychoanalytic and philosophical discourse, although he often uses Lacanian terms such as the symbolic order, symbol, signifier-signified relationship, Kristeva's neo-Freudian metapsychology, and Derrida's deconstruction. Moreover, his work cannot be approached under the conceptual framework of these theories, because some of them are not only incompatible but mutually hostile, e.g. Lacan and Derrida. We must follow, then, Cheimonas's metaphors, each time they appear, within their contexts.

However, Kristeva's theory of poetic language seems to coincide at certain points with Cheimonas's psycho-linguistic elaboration, particularly in its metaphoricity. Kristeva overlaps with Cheimonas on the idea of an all-encompassing language in literature which will not discriminate between normative and abnormal operations (as Lacan does); her concepts of the symbolic order (a Lacanian term) relating to the Father and of the semiotic activity relating to the body's drives, instinctual excitation, rhythm, intonation, relating to the m(other), this other whose voice has been repressed by the logocentrism of Western metaphysics, can both find room in one text. At the same time her definition of the other as m(other) brings her close to Derrida's *écriture féminine* as the repressed voice of the logocentric tradition.⁴⁰ Kristeva's concepts of poetic language as incest, as bodily vibration, as heterogeneity, of the subject in a process-of-becoming, bear a striking resemblance to both Joyce's and Cheimonas's androgynous artist, incest motif, and quest toward selfhood and otherness.

Cheimonas also shares with Joyce the themes of the questing voyager and of the inner adventure, as will be seen presently. *Peisistratos*, Cheimonas's first novel deals with the theme of art-making and the initiatory practice of an adolescent life into history and literature. *I Ekdromi* is a journey into language and literature, necessitated by the death of the father and disrupted by the ceaseless return of the mother. It is also an allegory for the parturition of new logos, through a decomposed and distorted family romance rendered in dispersed images and stories and fabricated around the doctrine of the Trinity. All these themes are recapitulated in *O Giatros Ineotis*, an allegory of death and rebirth in language. The new-born logos as sound penetrates the ear and deconstructs or destroys conventional narrative and language. Assimilating Joyce's book of the ear, *O Giatros Ineotis* dramatizes the incestuous character of language and announces the new-born logos, voice and sound,

⁴⁰ Of course Kristeva breaks with Derrida over the latter's exclusion of the subject's position within language and the impersonalization of the writing process.

as a deadly weapon which ends humanity and logocentric tradition. Cheimonas's first two books have intertextual links with Joyce's *U* while both *I Ekdromi* and *O Giatros Ineotis* draw upon *FW*. However, his overall subversive enterprise of narrative and language, his deliberate textual obscurity and linguistic inconsistency aspire to be in line with *FW*.

Both Joyce and Cheimonas state their ambition to take the place of a procreator, in the former case under the aesthetics of the invisible creator, in the latter as a herald of a new language. Both share ideas of the subversion of an archaic body of language or genre and both employ myth and archaic texts in an intertextual subversive endeavour. Both authors are concerned with questions of paternity, myth, and subversion in language. However, their difference lies in the way they activate and thematize the body. In Joyce's text the body appears through the return of the repressed in the gaps and ruptures of comedy and the stream of consciousness. In Cheimonas the return of the repressed is the text itself, the story and the language which no longer communicate. For Cheimonas non-communicative language encompasses the story of all stories, the history of all language. In an attempt at assimilation of the language of *FW*, he liberates its spontaneous utterances, endorsing a superfluous movement of the semiotic activity at the expense of the symbolic, as Kristeva might say. The instinctual disturbance is depicted in the body of language itself as malformed syntax, grammar, structure, and word. The body signifies the disorder of language. Its violation generates the uncanny and the grotesque, infecting the structure of all narrative, language and characters, imbuing the texts with a dreamy and frequently nightmarish atmosphere. Moreover, in Cheimonas's perspective, language is therapeutic; it does not simply obey cathartic needs but is the channel of reunion with the savage nature of the human being and the primitive that precedes the civilized individual, social and linguistic codes, history and the mythic past itself. For him, the process of becoming through language is not directed towards aesthetics and artistic creation but vice versa. This entails that language has to be deciphered from its metaphors and codes. The new

parturition of language has to be written in bodily terms. Thus body becomes the place where language is inscribed and not language the place where bodily functions are represented. Body stands as a metaphor for language while language becomes the channel towards body.

5.3. *Peisistratos* (1960), the Entrance to Literature and the Nightmare of 'hi(s)-story'

This [...] brute writing will continue in my subsequent books - and I give an absolute and positive meaning to this word, *brute*. It means the bold and difficult way, full of stones and danger of loss, talking about man's face, his bloody relation with the other, and the other, about man-consuming visions [...].⁴¹

Peisistratos is a brief story of aesthetic emancipation and self-becoming, as the narrator-character suggests in the very opening of the book: 'I am writing a book through which I am going to find myself, and I call it *Peisistratos*' (p. 3). Written in an inconsistent and fragmented style, *Peisistratos* sets forth all the terms of Cheimonas's undoing of the literary past. The book also presents an insight into aesthetic consciousness from the viewpoint of psychosomatic medicine or psychophysiology. It is the story of a young medical student who struggles to discover his identity, oscillating between external reality and his fantasies,

⁴¹ Written on the back cover of the second edition of *Peisistratos*, 2nd edn (Athens: Ipsilon, 1981). This twin otherness, which is associated with language, is clearly distinguished by the definite article of masculine and neuter gender in Greek language: the masculine gender alluding to the symbolic order, 'Autre' in Lacan's terms and the neutral, 'autre' to the unconscious, the Freudian id. 'The "other" has either commonplace or philosophical meaning (e.g. what exists as an opposite of, or excluded by, something else). When capitalized, the "Other" refers to a hypothetical place or space, that of the pure signifier, rather than to a physical entity or moral category. Lacan: "The unconscious of the subject is the discourse of the other" versus "The Other is, therefore, the place in which is constituted the I who speaks with him who hears"' (Kristeva, *Desire in Language*, p. 17). Both the masculine and the neuter 'other' are used in the original Greek text of Cheimonas. One can also compare the non-capitalized other with Cheimonas's announced non-capitalized logos, once named 'emmanuel'.

namely his untameable mania to become the king of Cartagena.⁴² This ambition functions as a metaphor for the conquest of all history and symbolic order itself. The text is overshadowed by the 'nightmare of history', in Stephen's words (*U*, 2: 377), which haunts the young medical student in his fantasies and struggle for the formation of his identity.⁴³ In this sense the book echoes the 'Nestor' episode of *U*. In Gilbert's version of Joyce's schemes, Peisistratos is associated with Stephen's young student Cyril Sargent, who shows him his corrected mathematical calculations.⁴⁴ These calculations make Stephen think of his Shakespearean aesthetic theory in terms of algebra.⁴⁵ The whole chapter is related to History and written in the style of personal 'catechism'. Stephen helps the young Sargent with his mathematics and realizes his ugliness; he compares himself with him, simultaneously meditating on the theme of maternal love which does not discriminate between beauty and ugliness. Cheimonas's *Peisistratos* reworks all these themes through a brief biographical experience tackling the problem of aesthetic emancipation of an unsettled artistic consciousness at the moment that it comes to terms with history and civilization.⁴⁶ This also makes it an ironic self-portrait of an artist-to-be, echoing Joyce's *P*.

Cheimonas takes the name Peisistratos from the ancient Greek legacy only to employ it as an allegory for history and civilization, and to expose history's neurotic authority over man's precarious predicament. Peisistratos shares his name with the ruler (tyrant) of Athens (600-510 B.C.), mentor and protector of fine arts and letters.⁴⁷ Peisistratos is also Homer's

⁴² A city, port of Mediterranean Spain, known in antiquity as New Carthage, and founded around 228 BC.

⁴³ Aristinos also draws the parallel between Stephen's nightmare of history and Cheimonas's perspective on the role of history and civilization in the destiny of the individual, in *Eisagogi stin Pezografia tou G. Cheimona*, pp. 138-9.

⁴⁴ In Homer's *Odyssey* (book III, IV), Peisistratos, Nestor's youngest son, greets Telemachus, Odysseus's son who has arrived in Pylos to seek information about his lost father. Peisistratos accompanies Telemachus on his trip to Menelaus's court where they meet Helen of Troy.

⁴⁵ 'Sitting at his side Stephen solved out the problem. He proves by algebra that Shakespeare's ghost is Hamlet's grandfather' (*U*, 2:151-2).

⁴⁶ It is also a kind of immature biography based on early experiences, as the author himself informs us on the back cover of the book.

⁴⁷ As a historical personality, Peisistratos introduces the theme of history. At the same time he is a mythical reflection of the narrator's imagination trying to reconstitute his kingdom in Carthage. His name is a compound word. The first component 'Peisi' derives from the ancient verb meaning 'persuade via speaking'. In names of people it means the one who can persuade the crowd.

‘leader of men’ (III, 483), ‘hero’ and ‘godlike’ (III, 415). In Cheimonas’s text, Peisistratos is an imaginary projection of the narrator. The narrator ceaselessly compares himself to Peisistratos in a game of desire and loathing, as he embarks upon a journey into society and initiates his apprenticeship to art. In spite of its brevity, the book is a compendium of styles and a pastiche of intertextual loans exploring identity, art and science. Thus, in its subtext, *Peisistratos* deals with aesthetic consciousness from various perspectives which share the common characteristic of combining art with science. Thus the text bears the echo of those authors and thinkers who worked in the same vein such as Goethe, Nietzsche, Joyce, and Woolf, as well as the representatives of phenomenology and psychoanalytic thought from Merleau-Ponty, to Freud to Lacan and Kristeva. At the same time it is a journey to selfhood and art embarked upon by the archetype of the questing voyager.

5.3.a. The Structure

The opening of the text presents the subject in a conflicting and contradictory world sustained within the polarities of real and imaginary, mind and body, identity and difference, good and bad, and ugly and beautiful. The subject’s ‘I’ is constantly contrasted with Peisistratos’s ‘he’. Through this contrast both the narrator and his imaginary interlocutor lose identity, lapse into disintegration and collapse. This first book of Cheimonas, along with his second, *I Ekdromi*, retains a close relationship with external reality although this is but a point of departure for the narrator’s thoughts which follow his random impressions as he experiences the world.⁴⁸ Reality alternates with fantasy in an almost even balance as expressed in the successive alternation of chapters from everyday life with the chapters which are titled ‘Hyperbolic Narrative’, the hyperbole implying their imaginative content. The chapters referring to real life denote it by their names: ‘The road’,

⁴⁸ It takes place in Salonica, as the street name ‘Tsimiski’ and the name of the building ‘Rotonda’ suggest.

'The auditorium', 'The consulting room', 'The drummer', 'The road' again, 'Grace' (a name), 'Grace' again, 'The King of Cartagena', 'Philosophy'. Breaking through these chapters, which draw their themes from short events of human life in the street, the neighbourhood, the hospital, the university and so on, the hyperbolic narratives operate as an intrusion of the narrator's imagination into real life.

The book is a collage of mini-stories and events. The mini-stories mainly occupy the 'Hyperbolic Narrative' chapters and take place in the narrator's imagination; they either refer to the narrator's thoughts and feelings or take place within the closed space of Peisistratos's room which represents the enclosed mind. The seven 'Hyperbolic Narratives' deal with the following themes: the story of an actor, histrionic and hysterical, which is an allegory of art-making; two catechisms, reminiscent of the personal catechism technique of 'Nestor', on self-knowledge, and on the notion of truth and the meaning of life in philosophical and scientific terms which Peisistratos performs before the artist-to-be; two lecture-like chapters, one on the brain as an intellectual and psychological organ and the other on the intersection of creativity with pain; an ironic recitation of an alleged medieval epic - an allegory for the subversion of epic itself; and the final splitting of the narrator and Peisistratos in a chapter dealing with intertextuality.

This alternation of chapters produces a more or less stable structure in the text, of a cyclic recurrence.⁴⁹ It also echoes Joyce's Viconian idea of the cyclic movement of History; its nightmarish recurrence haunts the young medical student as he tries to establish an identity of his own. Peisistratos appears as this nightmarish image which intrudes into the subject's

⁴⁹ This is an echo of phenomenology's premise that the body and the world coexist in a concentric arrangement at the level of senses, Merleau Ponty's 'circles' or 'vortices' (*Phenomenology of Perception*, p. 191). The core story is expanded in the peripheries carrying its units of meaning through vectors which, as they move away from the centre, are rendered with autonomy.

fantasy as Mephistopheles does in Faust's laboratory and study.⁵⁰ As the narrator says: 'I have a nightmare and Peisistratos is to blame' (p. 9).

The external world, impressions, images, incidents such as the imaginary relationship with Peisistratos, are presented in a dream-like atmosphere. Terrifying events such as a young woman's injury to the genitals by a piercing iron-rod, or the uncontrollable emotional tension of the actor's hysterical performance in one of the 'Hyperbolic Narratives', are similarly presented in a bland, indifferent manner. As the titles and the content of the chapters declare, this reality is a forgery, exclusively based on an absolute subjectivity which eventually absorbs the world into its own perspective. An atmosphere of dreamy fogginess is thematized in the first 'Hyperbolic Narrative':

I have a nightmare and Peisistratos is to blame. The fog falls from an unknown sky and everything is imbued with fog - of course fog is the most common element in nightmares. Nightmares should be separated into two categories: in the first belong the true nightmares with a terrifying spectacle and a continuously increasing anxiety - with an intensity gradually climaxing so that in the end you spring up screaming short incomprehensible phrases in a weird voice. In the second belong the others which are a calm series of insignificant pictures from everyday life - you see familiar, friendly faces looking at you smiling or shaking hands with you. And yet behind those blissful scenes, [...] you sense [...] an indefinable threat. [...] Everything unfolds in low tones, in a treacherous vagueness. That is why these sorts of dreams can be called dreams with a nightmarish implication [...]. My nightmare has a special characteristic. It might not be a nightmare at all. (*Peisistratos*, p. 9-10)

The narrator's description suggests that the chapters relating to external reality are subservient to this dream-like process constituted by a calm series of insignificant pictures from everyday life with familiar and yet unfamiliar images. They are as ambiguous and evasive as the narrator's last phrase that his nightmare might not be a nightmare. Everyday

⁵⁰ I draw this parallel to Goethe's *Faust* because the subject's profession, which is also its only distinctive characteristic, is related to science and medicine as Faust's is. It also alludes to the author's profession, for Cheimonas is a psychiatrist. Moreover the nightmarish appearance of Peisistratos within the narrative recalls that of Mephistopheles in *Faust*. Similarly the appearance of a young woman named Margareta, in the chapter entitled 'The neighbourhood', relates both to Faust's Margareta and to Joyce's Penelope since she sits in front of her window

events are presented in dispersed images, incoherently associated, in a mode of free association, which, however, is wilfully employed and consequently consciously controlled. Despite their realistic setting, in the road, the university, the hospital etc, they function as recollections of real events, overcharged with symbolic meaning (always implying something different from what they denote - Cheimonas's para-aphasic functioning of language), and standing for language itself.⁵¹ They connote an emotional status represented in visualized concepts, Cheimonas's 'Man-concepts', frozen images of life encapsulated in words:

*The image, about which I speak, must convey what optically can be revealed from human existence and condition, and obeys the rhythms of the aesthetics of the history of man. Perhaps what constitutes the Power of logos, its anxiety, its untellable pictorial achievement, is its distance from the common, 'the visual picture'. How does it span this distance? Sometimes an obscure name passes through its image: Reason, Heresy, Necessity. They are not personifications of a medieval theatre, but real beings, they are Man-concepts. [...] These three materials (language, image, concept) have a lunar movement which is different for each of them. They rarely co-ordinate in rhythm and orbit: when the concept hardens, the image unfolds slowly and widely and logos becomes motionless within the passive participles of the verbs. (Author's emphasis, *Exi Mathemata*, p. 115)*

Reality, therefore, is employed as a suggestive metaphor for language itself and its meaning-vectors emit the deciphering message of an emotional status entrapped within the symbolic verbal image-concept.⁵² The real events and the characters in *Peisistratos* do not function as mimesis of reality, but as the representation of the bodily motility which has been frozen within, and repressed by, the conceptual functioning of institutional logos, reason and logocentricity. Or as Cheimonas, paraphrasing Aristotelian mimesis as 'an

embroidering. The embroidery allusion to Penelope's web has been considered by many critics to be the texture which underlies Joyce's *Odyssey*, summarized in Molly's monologue.

⁵¹ They stand as 'Memory of the words which have been lost and expectations of their incarnation into the words that are about to be born' ('Mia Eisigisi', *Exi Mathemata*, p. 115).

⁵² This is a most vivid actualization of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological claim that language is not a conceptual or empirical institution: 'What remains to me of the word once learnt is its style as constituted by its formation and sound' (*Phenomenology of Perception*, p. 180).

imitation of an action', puts it, 'there is no other way than the body. Soul is the imitation of an important body' (*O Adelfos*, p. 41). Subsequently, then, the quest for artistic emancipation and self-identity is a journey into language, an exploratory adventure which seeks to demystify its conventions and to dissolve its institutional terms, namely symbols. Inevitably this will take place on language's own terms, words will speak about words and language itself will speak for this inquiry into Logos.

This erratic employment of reality creates the fusion of dream and reality, as if the reader is all the time thrust into the world of a closed mind whose free associative thought recalls Freudian dream-work. The dream-like fluidity carries along with it characters and language. The two basic characters of the text, the narrator and Peisistratos, have no other distinguishing characteristics than the former's identity as a medical student and the latter's imaginary physiognomy; whereas a multitude of characters parade through the text, their presence following the fortuitous invasion of disparate images of everyday life like mere names indicating an identity or a profession. Most of them display some sort of a psychosomatic disturbance, an element which recurs in all Cheimonas's texts and denotes the neurotic operation of normative language. An epileptic woman, the mother, the actor, the professor, the doctor, the sick man, aunt Domni, the drummer, the Turkish woman, the nurse, a dying little girl, the grocer, a prostitute, a man, a woman; but also Margarita, Sebastian, Goni, Takis, Pauline. All of them, being presences without internal life, appear within the text as wandering human images, recalling the 'beingless beings' of the 'Wandering rocks' episode. They constitute a mosaic of human beings whose particularity has deteriorated into mere names.

Embedded stories function in the same way. Very often in Cheimonas a participant in the story narrates a story himself. Usually these stories function as allegories for concealed meaning. In *Peisistratos* this function is performed by Peisistratos's imaginary persona in

Leonardo's story, a parody of an epic and an allegory of aesthetic emancipation, a 'hyperbolic narrative' located between 'The Drummer' and 'The Road' chapters. Similarly, all the narrated events of real life have an allegorical meaning. 'The Drummer' chapter takes place in the hospital and associates the sound of the drum with an iron rod penetrating a young girl's hymen. Thus sound and speech, and subsequently Logos, relate to a violent attack on the female body.

The language of these chapters, then, is characterized by three distinctive elements: The first is a discursive shifting of voices without any distinctive punctuation. Neither direct nor indirect speech is separated off by commas. This is a peculiarity of Cheimonas which pertains most emphatically in his first two books. Later, in *To Mythistorema*, this is changed to italicized discourse for the voice of each persona. The second concerns a constant shifting from one grammatical subject to another, a paratactic representation of events and presences, befitting the connotative operation of the dream work. The third is the thematization of a violated or morbid female body, as an evocation of that otherness which is hidden behind the symbolic, and its graphic representation in the dissolution of the discourse. In this way, the hidden meaning of the words comes into being in bodily terms. The blood-letting word relates to the corporeal, to flesh, to the mother.

Within this blurring of difference between voices, and between the real and the imaginary, the reader can grasp the depiction of the disfigured female body which exacerbates the haemorrhage of the discourse. Aunt Domni is dying to the sound of a drum-beat, a Turkish woman masturbates while a young girl wounded in the genitals bleeds to death. Grace is a young woman who responds to the narrator's courtly conceptualization of erotic involvement with her body which he nonetheless rejects as filthy and unclean. The female body demonstrates the desire hidden in language, and through its disfigurement the violent suppression of the instinctual caused by consciousness, namely the power of the

symbolic imposed on the semiotic, in Kristeva's terms. Yet the semiotic breaks through the symbolic via the female body to declare the presence of otherness within the text. The graphic depiction of Aunt Domni's death is a case in point:

She came puffing and blowing/ and her narrow shoulders were humped/ and her lower lip trembled/
and a hand milked her heart. She lay down and her breast convulsed / aunt Domni is dying / her eyes
drooped and were full of tears. The doctor came / he said it was an inflammation of the lungs / he took
blood from her/ the wall and the bed were full of blood [...]. Death is a black thing as big as the whole
world and it may be even bigger and in the place of a face it has a mouth. (*Peisistratos*, pp. 31-32)⁵³

Read aloud, to befit Cheimonas's claim that his writing is oral logos, the discourse resembles the staccatos of Bloom's stream of consciousness. The fluidity of the discourse is based on violation of punctuation and on fusing the voices of the personae along with the dreamy citation of everyday scenes. The disfigurement of the female body is reflected in language. The symbolic operation of language is condemned as the source of man's alienation. At the same time language as the expression of the body is celebrated as the medium through which he can reconstitute his relation with the world. On this latter function is based the therapeutic language and literary project of Cheimonas demanding an overall liberation of otherness: the violent thematization of the female body represents the return of the repressed as feminine voice and body buried in the male unconscious. Yet his exploitation of the female body sustains the sexual hypostasis of the subject of enunciation as different: as the male speaking voice surviving at the expense of a female sacrificed body; it appears only as a disfigured body standing for the voice of the 'other', always appropriated and exploited.

The artist-to-be narrator arises out of this pell-mell of narrative and language and tries to enter the space of literature, which is the place of imagination and excess. As the formula of 'hyperbolic narrative' suggests, the shifting from reality to imagination is an excessive

⁵³ I have put slashes in the place of absent commas to make the text readable.

process, the exorbitant, inner experience.⁵⁴ The narrator converses with his imaginary interlocutor, a projection beyond reality, a conversation between history and the self which is also the theme of the 'Nestor' episode in *U*. The narrator also shares with Stephen the despondency and the psychosomatic anxiety of artistic creativity. Peisistratos, on the other hand, is the only participant in this double story who has a name that conveys meaning, and he can speak and develop theories. He can even address the subject as 'melancholic sulphonamide', an allusion to the morbid, aesthetic embryonic philosopher and artist, Stephen. Peisistratos is loved and hated in Cheimonas's text as the incarnation of all human wisdom and normality. At the same time he is an archetype of the symbolic order, Logos and God, a ghost haunting the narrator's life. As the narcissistic projection of the narrator, Peisistratos mirrors the functions of a disturbed consciousness and an unsettled subjectivity, of the writing subject in a process of becoming, which we encountered in Xefloudas and Pentzikis as the descendant of Joyce's artistic persona, Stephen Dedalus.

Cheimonas handles the issue of aesthetic consciousness as a personal inner adventure with psychosomatic properties inextricably associated with the subject's subversive attitude toward history and civilization. That is, the act of creation starts with a negation which is also the basis of Joyce's subversion, Stephen's 'non serviam', anti-theology, mockery and turning upside down of the literary legacy. In *Peisistratos* this is actualized through a harsh dramatization of the act of creation in the actor's story and an allegory of aesthetic emancipation narrated by Peisistratos, Leonardo's parody of an epic. The former explores artistic creativity on psycho-physiological grounds and the latter approaches the awakening of the artist as an inner adventure with epic dimensions.

⁵⁴ Peisistratos as a figure wrested from history is non-existent. He comes on stage as the subject puts himself radically in question. The narrator's negativity echoes Blanchot's end of history '[...] for the man of great reason because he thinks of himself as the whole and because he works without pause to make the world reasonable' in 'The Limit Experience', in *The Infinite Conversation*, trans. by Susan Hanson (London: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), pp. 85-281 (p. 204).

Peisistratos deals with aesthetic consciousness through a vulgar dramatization of the psychoanalytic concepts aiming at an overall lowering of meta-psychological concepts to their corporeal origins. In order to 'let language be one with the living "meaning"', an ironic undoing of the terminology itself occurs.⁵⁵ Bleak images and incomprehensible language highlight the biological subtext underlying the theoretical contrivances.⁵⁶ Thus, Lacan's logos as phallus, and the mirror stage, the subject's anxiety as it enters symbolic order, language and society, are dramatized and sometimes ridiculed. Such, for example, is the picturesque representation of external reality in the opening chapter as a 'Karagiozis-like priapus, drawn with charcoal' on a wall with his ass-like genitals dangling (p. 7). Similarly the narrator projects himself onto Peisistratos in Lacanian terms of the mirror stage. This projection generates the narrator's anxiety and ambivalence in his process of artistic emancipation. According to Lacan, the narcissistic projection of a subject onto a medium, in the child's case in the mirror, is the individual subject's need to gain a sense of bodily unity and mastery; the individual human subject uses the image of his/her body as a projective *gestalt*. In the text this image is embodied in the writing about the projective *gestalt* of Peisistratos. The subject's idea of himself is mediated by his reflection in Peisistratos. This is supported by the constant comparison between the 'I' and Peisistratos with one great difference; the subject's comparison of himself to Peisistratos results in the former's degradation, a suggestion that the immature artistic persona does not surrender to the symbolic order.

I am ugly/ I am very ugly and I am insignificant, I am not worth a penny. [...] Beside me is Peisistratos who is handsome and tall/ he speaks smartly and he calls me melancholic sulfonamide and the rest laugh at me and he told me once that I have too many girlfriends but my best girlfriend is

⁵⁵ 'Mia Eisigisi', *Exi Mathemata*, p. 114.

⁵⁶ Such are the examples of the hospital scenes of the chapter 'O tympanistis' (the drummer), where an iron-rod penetrates a young girl's hymen and a Turkish woman's tumour is presented in an uncanny erotic scene, pp. 35-38. Otherwise, as he puts it: 'it may be that the extension of life within literature could be given by nations with a crude (and for this reason lyric) psyche, dense with passion and innocence – with a raw (and for this reason moving and moved) language. Greece belongs among these nations' (Ibid, p. 117).

reality. I am poisoned by envy/ I have a bitterness and an anger at this unfairness and a mania that lashes my mind - I wince with an imaginary and sudden pain/ I crumple the papers that I have in front of me and Peisistratos looks at me questioningly. I get up in the middle of the crowded auditorium/ [...] I find myself before the professor who stops talking and looks at me and I wince with an imaginary pain and I bring my hand towards my throat as if I were suffocating, a whisper arises behind me and it stimulates me. (*Peisistratos*, p. 13)

Peisistratos himself is a signifier, a mere name referring to history and culture. As such he has 'a labyrinthine character' and walks in 'Wagnerian accompaniment' in the narrator's own words (p. 34). The subject, then, has to reverse the idea that man's relationship with the medium of language is one of absolute mastery and to show in bodily terms the suppression the symbol has imposed on man. At the same time a body-language may speak the act of creation. Such is the effect of the histrionic and hysteric performance of the actor which is contrasted to Peisistratos unscathed presence:

[...] I skillfully stage my fantasies living the absence of life and I can formulate not only the plot of a dream but also its most fine, and ulterior details. My writing, I am not going to confide to anyone else, I am going [...] to enjoy it, to hate it [...]. I call Peisistratos and the fantasies I have about him [...] extra action because I have in my mind the story of a great old actor. He [...] played classical theatre, Shakespeare and Racine, [...] but he also had an eccentricity. After the end of each performance when the lights went off the audience had gone and the theatre was empty, he went alone on stage and he performed the same role that he had in the play, but this time he rendered the role in an hyperbolic and weird way, the words he uttered, were fused with his own words, in an indecent voice and with raw grimaces he made enormous and terrible gestures as if he were having an epileptic fit, he impersonated the same hero as before but now in an incoherent and mad way. All this he called surplus action and he did it, he said, because he was obsessed by the idea that the crowd, full of malice and sarcasm was lurking in the darkness of the theater-hall, ready to devour him at the slightest gesture or word which would be out of character, or at the slightest unnecessary gesture made by mistake; [...] However, he couldn't do otherwise, and something like madness overwhelmed him and he grew more and more terrified and could hardly keep the rhythm of the role while he was

performing. [...] Later, he comforted himself with a lot of surplus gestures and words; in this way he achieved his balance again and he was ready to start the same thing again next evening. (*Peisistratos*, pp. 10-11)

The narrator's 'extra action' and the actor's 'surplus acting' dramatize Cheimonas's ideas about the biological and psycho-physiological grounds of the act of creation which overlap with Koestler's analysis of a surplus of emotions dwelling in the sympathetic branch of the nervous system and which are released in muscular motility in moments when consciousness is unrestrained.⁵⁷ The actor's fear and terror under an invisible threat points to a totally imaginary and unreasonable situation which is ascribed to the moment of creation as well as its presentation as a therapeutic means for restoring normality. The category of the evoked emotions alludes to the sympathetic-adrenergic system which is absolutely dependent on the thalamic operations of the cortex pertaining to the unconscious. Cannon's pioneering work on the functions of feelings of fear, anger and rage show that the bodily changes produced by this type of emotion, involve an incomparably heavier machinery than purely cognitive processes in the cortex and cannot be recalled unless they discharge their energy.⁵⁸ This uncontrollable intrusion of the unconscious, derives from the lack of co-ordination between older parts of the human brain (thalamic functions) and the newer parts, neo-cortex, cortex where reason dwells, as shown by MacLean's researches.⁵⁹ Cheimonas also recognizes a sort of a fundamental blunder in man's evolution, as the source of the uncontrollable machinery of the emotions which give rise to human creativity

⁵⁷ Aristinos suggests something similar when he attributes the harsh human aggression which extends to perversion, in Cheimonas's texts, to the visceral impulses which Koestler associates with the paleocerebral, the phylogenetically most ancient division of the cortex, the 'animalistic cortex' as he says, (*Eisagogi stin Pezografia tou G. Cheimona*, p. 65). Aristinos quotes from Koestler's *The Ghost in the Machine*.

⁵⁸ Cannon attributes the feelings of pain, hunger, fear and rage to the sympathetic-adrenal system. Joyce also seems to be close to such a realization when he says, 'hungry man is an angry man' (*U*, 8:662). W. B. Cannon, *Bodily changes in Pain, Hunger, Fear, and Rage* (New York: Dappleton, 1924).

⁵⁹ Paul MacLean, *The Triune Brain in Evolution* (New York: Plenum, 1990).

in general.⁶⁰ The same suggestion recurs in the dramatization of the genesis of language in *Ekdromi*.

The actor dramatizes this surplus of emotion in gestures and words, trying to free himself from the unreasonable fear he experiences before the censoring audience; in the same way that laughter's emotional discharge operates in Stephen's laughing 'to free his mind from his mind's bondage' (*U*, 9:1153). Cheimonas's subversion is turned against highly speculative fields just as Joyce's is against the whole theological-philosophical tradition. The effect and the target are the same although the action takes place in strikingly different contexts; Cheimonas's text is an uncanny irony while Joyce's is a corporeal comedy. Nevertheless, this story is also Cheimonas's allegory for the sources of art-making with obvious philosophical and literary loans and implications, including Blanchot's theory of the limit-experience, focusing on desire, voice and gesture, Derrida's concept of the sign *sous rature* and *différance*, and Nietzsche's Dionysian spirit comprising both pain and creativity.

As repetition, performance and emotion all take place within the actor's words, within language, the surplus action both differs from and defers the words of the text the actor performs, thus validating the claim that language figures and re-figures desire when it is staged in the world of fantasy and against the law of regularity related to 'reality'. That is the possibility enacted by the theory of the violating parallelism, following the actor's story; it functions as an explanation for the surplus action. The violated parallelism which has reduced all differences into 'an ideogram representing "the beginning of regularity"' (p. 12) has to be violated many times over so that the real meaning residing in the body and its drives can appear. 'The mechanical repetition of the words till they lose their meaning' (*Peisistratos*, p. 12), results in incomprehensibility and absurdity. In Beckett's novel *Watt*,

⁶⁰ See Chimonas's analysis of the 'schizophysiology' of the brain which echoes MacLean's analysis, 'Phenomenologia tou Logu', *Exi Mathemata*, pp. 23-24, fn. 1.

the homonymous hero, a patient in an asylum, employs this ceaseless repetition which changes or empties the word of its meaning. Not only the order of the words within the sentence is reversed but also that of the letters within one word.⁶¹ The actor's performance suggests something similar. This is also Cheimonas's technique of unravelling the absurdity of our era, a sort of aphasic language employed to speak for language itself. Or in Zarathustra's words 'One may well speak in a hunchbacked manner to a hunchback!' (*Thus Spoke Zarathustra* p. 163).⁶² Such is the possibility which the actor's performance enacts. The merging of the script's words with his own expressed in a 'weird way', 'in an indecent voice, and with raw grimaces and enormous and terrible gestures as if he were suffering from epilepsy' (p. 11), suggests a sort of morbidity, expressed in the actor's surplus action.⁶³ It is also a challenge to the signifying operations of language, a re-rendering of the sign erased and re-written which aims at an exhaustion of the limits of language (Derrida's neologisms) until they deteriorate into a body language, sound and gesture speaking more than the words themselves.

The precarious situation of the actor emerges from his fantasy of his audience as a devouring crowd and reflects the narrator's own condition at the very moment that he encounters Peisistratos, who is an imaginary personification of history, knowledge, completion, and a manifestation of the divine, of God himself.⁶⁴ The loss of the subject comes as a result of its narcissistic projection onto Peisistratos and whatever his nightmarish appearance represents; it is disintegration of the self, shattering of the ego and a

⁶¹ Violation of syntax and grammar results in incomprehensibility which is evidenced in Watt's case as he converses with his asylum-mate, Sam.

⁶² Nietzsche's voice echoes many times in Cheimonas's texts, particularly in the story of Leonardo in *Peisistratos*, and in *O Giatros Ineotis*.

⁶³ This also echoes Blanchot's 'limit-experience' which is 'the experience of what is still to be attained when all is attained of what is still to be known when all is known' (*The Infinite Conversation*, p. 205). 'A strange surplus' (p. 207). It is speech and gesture, crowd and individual which surround the field of this insatiable desire operating beyond the limits, beyond possibility; it demands the impossible, in Blanchot's terms and moves towards insanity, as the actor's state shows.

⁶⁴ Peisistratos is loved and hated like God (an echo of Bataille's inner experience). However when the narrator decides to enter the space of literature, the space of loss and death in Blanchot's terms, Cheimonas shifts from the field of philosophy to psychology.

perturbation in language which borders on aphasia, psychotic discourse or even schizophrenia. The psychological crisis that the narrator experiences, and which is recurrently exacerbated within all Cheimonas' texts, is more often characterized as epilepsy, pointing to psychosomatic disturbance, it stresses more the psycho-physiological than the philosophical point of view of his literary writing. Originated by history and philosophy, his treatment of man's situation in literature, deals with the precarious psychological situation of the human being coming to terms with his inner self. Cheimonas, then, tries to bring under the shelter of his own 'biosophy', to use Aristinos's term, elements of divergent fields of recent and contemporary psychoanalytic and philosophical thought, in an all-encompassing tendency recalling Joyce's 'all in all'. However, the narrator's unsettlement and ambiguity are rooted in this *mélange*, as he tries to shape an identity of his own. That is also the reason why the narrator undergoes a psychosomatic crisis in the auditorium in front of his professor and Peisistratos which exemplifies his own anguish as he comes to terms with all knowledge and intellectual activity.

5.3.b. Leonardo's Aesthetic Emancipation

The narrator and his imaginary projection, Peisistratos, converse in the suffocating enclosure of the latter's room, in an atmosphere of intense emotions of love and hate, mastery and slavery, which recall Beckett's *Endgame*. The external world recedes, and Peisistratos, performing the blind emotionality of Hamm, gives lectures to the narrator, an embryonic intellect who is convulsed by his contradictory feelings towards Peisistratos's superiority and absolute mastery. Like Beckett's hero Clov, the narrator tries to free himself from the tyrannical mastery of Peisistratos. In Cheimonas's text this takes place metaphorically through the narrator's decision to write a narrative, actually to rewrite the

story itself by putting to death all literary tradition. In this ambience Peisistratos recites his own writings to the narrator, namely the epic of Leonardo. After he finishes his recitation he makes an erotic move towards the narrator who in despair runs away from him. The narrator meets a woman who informs him, and the reader, of the intertextual character of the story:

-I am Electra and I am waiting for him. Have you perhaps seen him anywhere?

-You are a liar. Since Electra -

[...]

-Everything is copied, said the woman serenely. Even the poem. Only that you changed the name and you call the knight Leonardo while there they call him Leonardo. (*Peisistratos*, p. 51)

In the attire of an ancient god, and in front of the narrator who suffers from psychosomatic anxiety, Peisistratos recites his writing: Leonardo's story is presented as the distillation of a long philological and philosophical legacy, developed in a parody of an epic. It relates the adventures and the heroic deeds of a young man who abandons his mother and father to seek for the truth of life. The story interlaces divergent literary and philosophical tracks, from Christ to Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* and from Woolf's *Orlando* to Freud's essay on Leonardo Da Vinci.

'the hyperbolic narrative'

I have a headache and Peisistratos holds a small notebook with the title 'notebook of calligraphy' on the cover and he says

-The Knight Leonardo.

Peisistratos becomes wrapped in a bright blue blanket from which he makes a tunic; he stands and begins to declaim.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ I follow Cheimonas's graphic representation of his text. The text that Peisistratos declaims has no capitals, full stops or commas, and is written in italics and with a typographical inconsistency.

listen masters to this story which is wonderful and real and if you want give it the proper value and if you want go on with your pleasant talk about the backside of the maiden who offers you wine

I am going to tell about the knight called leonardo from his birth he was nominated knight against the law because he was from a famous family wealth and honour purple some of his ancestors six or seven probably seven were kings this man was peculiar his peculiarity was that he looked like either a pursued or a pursuing person you can not distinguish he was seeking and always seeking who knows what

*as a child untouched by the desires of adolescence eleven twelve years old he suddenly disappeared from the court of the mansion out of their mind the mother and the father of the country send people to look for him and they were astonished when they found him in the middle of a famous wise man's chamber which was full of the profound breath of knowledge and amongst many wise men famous names of science and literature and at that very moment he was telling with his girlish voice the solemn old men time is my father and matter is my mother's name then the mother got angry the great lady said you careless and ungrateful child pain of my innards and pain of my soul you thoughtless and blessed child why are you causing such sorrow to me and to your father and he retorted why are you and the king sorry since my parents are others but they did not understand his words they thought were the silly talk of the boy and quickly they took him home by force leaving behind in contempt and ignoring the genuflection of the wise and the behaviour of the wise people they disdained them only the mother, afterwards, kept those words closed in her heart in deep bitterness she sealed them within her soul although they were incomprehensible to her [...]. (My emphases, *Peisistratos*, pp. 38-39)*

Peisistratos goes on declaiming, relating events from Leonardo's life, as he grows older. Leonardo suffers from his obsession of always pursuing something unknown or unattainable. His quest is apparently the discovery of the real self. Virginia Woolf's *Orlando* is one possible allusion owing to its parodic style; Leonardo seems to be an echo of Orlando's name and adventures. Leonardo's deeds seem to be stimulated by an unknown internal power. His bravery is not heroic; it is the necessity of the inner self to escape and to formulate a new existence. The text also seems to draw upon the tradition of the Greek

medieval epic, possibly *Digenis Akritis*, as suggested by the word 'kyris', (meaning master and father), and the reference to the Amazon 'nychto' (night) which may well be an allusion to Digenis' duel with the Amazon 'Maximou'.⁶⁶ However, the name 'nychtho' also echoes *Faust's* Erichtho, a Thessalian sorceress, reputed to be a malignant blood-sucking monster, but able to prophesy and to conjure up the dead.⁶⁷ Leonardo's narrative is actually a parody and subversion of the epic, not only in content but in form and style. According to the woman [Electra] who meets the narrator after Peisistratos's recitation, it is a poem (p. 51). However, verse, rhythm and metre are violated and transformed into a prosaic discourse with no punctuation. Leonardo's wanderings echo those of Digenis's deeds but only superficially. Leonardo's true course recalls Orlando's existential quest toward otherness, the other being the opposite gender. This journey is also a philosophical and literary adventure. Most characteristic of Leonardo's wanderings is his insatiable thirst for the knowledge of truth which associates him with Faust, and with Freud's Italian Faust, Leonardo da Vinci.⁶⁸ Faust's impact can be traced in Leonardo's quest for identity in various experiences: in love, in war, in charity, in philosophy, in lustful feasts, in fights. But he cannot find tranquillity. His pain and suffering are aggravated until he decides to create his own God. Similarly, Man's plastic creation of God, as the following excerpt argues, echoes Freud's Leonardo Da Vinci. The narrative's biblical and apocalyptic style also echoes Nietzsche's Zarathustra.

⁶⁶ On Maximou see 'O Drakos, to Lontari, i Apelates, i Maximou', *Vasileios Digenis Akritis ke ta Asmata tou Armouri ke tou Iou tou Andronikou*, ed. by Stylianos Alexiou (Athens: Ermis, 1990), pp. 130-144; see 'kyris', *ibid*, pp. 123.860, and 128.1043, 1048, 1052;

⁶⁷ Intertextual links with Goethe also appear in *I Ekdromi* and *O Giatros Ineotis*. Goethe, *Faust*, trans. by David Luke, 2 vols (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), II, pp. 78. 7004, 246.

⁶⁸ Freud in his essay 'Leonardo Da Vinci and a memory of his childhood', states that 'Because of his [...] indefatigable thirst for knowledge Leonardo has been called the Italian Faust' (p.164). Freud discusses Leonardo's psycho-sexual history of homosexuality in association with his fantasy of an androgynous mother-goddess who in a bird-like vision visits the child in its cradle and puts its tail in the child's mouth. Leonardo's biography has also the Faustian characteristic of combining art with science, which makes it a useful source for Cheimonas's enterprise. Sigmund Freud, *Art and Literature*, ed. Angela Richards, Albert Dickson, vol. 14 (Harmondsworth : Penguin, 1985), pp. 145-231 (p. 164).

I am going to beat you amazon nycto⁶⁹ I am going to create god my own god the god of my profound desire of my profound pain the god of offering [...] when the years pass it may happen that the quick and elusive deer of time will encounter somewhere either in a holy wood or in a scientific laboratory[...] it doesn't matter where that man who will say with certainty and courage

let gods fall into our dreams[...] from where we raised them let them take off their [...] ornaments let them descend from olympus and from the pedestals of the temples let them deny their generous and understanding mien let them come to us as if they were our children our monstrous children incompatible with and weak before our robustness let the tombstone that covers their corpses be rolled away and yes we will feel sad because for long [...] we had hung their symbols around our necks and above our beds but now we will forget them because now the time has come because now I am the first man and the last god

[...] in an ancient book about godcreation the following is written and the man said let us make god in our image and let him dominate over the fish of the sea and over the fowls of the air and over the beasts and all over the earth and over every serpent on the earth and over me and man created god in his image in the image of man he created god⁷⁰

he fixed him on ivory pedestals to endure a long time and not fall a standing body and on the top he put the head of a man that is to say an expression of profound pain but he kept all his craft for the hand which ought to be a hand of offering which gives tranquility and courage and hope and response [...] just before his ultimate departure he managed to find happiness and peace due to this one-handed god created and adored due to this hand

afterwards leonardo died and his last words were that your strong hand should become mine but this does not matter what is interesting is that the knight leonardo finally found pleasure [...] in the palm of the holy hand of the beneficent who always gave what leonardo desired wholeheartedly happiness knowledge punishment courage hope dreams and anything else you want

⁶⁹ Nychta means night in Greek. It is also an echo of Zarathustra's Great noontide, the second coming.

⁷⁰ This biblical reversal recalls Joyce's theory of 'postcreation' (U, 14:289-312).

Peisistratos closed the notebook and looked at me with his eyes wide. (My emphases underlined, *Peisistratos*, pp. 42-44)

The story is a heterogeneous admixture, a pastiche of styles and an intertextual crossroad, fabricated around the questing voyager archetype. It is also an abridgment of a long literary legacy from Homer to Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* novels which entwine the quest for education, self-knowledge and identity with artistic emancipation. At the same time, it functions as a synopsis of philosophical wandering relating to Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*; while in line with the most recent terms of psychoanalytic thought and literary legacy, it has the overtones of the androgynous artist, as denoted by Leonardo's 'girlish voice' (p. 39) and the intertextual allusions suggested by his name, echoing Leonardo Da Vinci's homosexual artistic identity, and the cross-gendered persona of Woolf's *Orlando*.

The story of the knight Leonardo is significant for the whole of Cheimonas's work. It demonstrates his narrative devices and the core of his subversive endeavour. The striking italicising of the whole text, which puzzles the reader, suggests an authority whose supremacy derives from its epic character. Yet the violation of the syntax turns it into a parody of an epic. The lack of capital letters at the beginning of each paragraph recalls Cheimonas's reference to Logos as emmanuel with lower-case 'e', a diminishing of the value of the symbolic order which is accompanied by the negation of God and announces the demise of metaphysics in Nietzschean terms. The whole text subverts the theological concept of creation and along with it, conventional language. The syntactic and grammatical violation of the body of the text projects a textual materialization, sustained by the graphic representation of the discourse. Simultaneously the progenitors of Leonardo take on a material substance: time is the father and matter is the mother.⁷¹ There is no violation of the body, because the discourse speaks about its own violence that subverts

⁷¹ This has also an overtone of Nietzsche's naturalistic approach to human nature, the necessity of translating man back into nature as a form of animal life among the others.

origins, identity, and language-meaning. The essence of the Leonardo story lies neither in his breaking with his family, nor in its replacement by the concepts of time and space (my father is time and my mother is matter), but in the very moment that he abandons all dichotomies to create a god in the image of man, an artistic projection of the man himself. Apparently this is not a new god, but the work of art itself which assimilates man in sculpture-like representation. This depiction stresses the human characteristics, by emphatically insisting upon its bodily features, particularly the giving hand. Leonardo's art, however, is a crippled and one-handed god, and so is Peisistratos's art and allegory of art.

The story echoes Nietzsche's nihilistic rejection of Christianity's overpowering and stifling conceptions about suffering in an earthly life in the name of a joyful afterlife. His Leonardo may not be a superman but he is a wanderer who abnegated the God-hypothesis and the whole of logocentric tradition.⁷² And still the narrator does not accept Peisistratos's metaphors for he runs away, abandoning him in an emotional crisis (p. 49). In a following chapter, 'the King of Cartagena', after the narrator has dreamt that he has become the King, he says:

Peisistratos is my great step, my great and my first step. I am going to write it from the beginning and to expand it to make it better and more terrifying, it must be done in this way otherwise I will die. I am going to change it. (*Peisistratos*, p. 59)

The narrator's terrifying writing, his Πάσχον-Ποιούv (p. 32) (suffering-creating), interlaces Nietzsche's Dionysian spirit, as the creative affirmation of life in spite of the suffering, Zarathustras's words about writing as blood-letting, and the discovery of the art of writing through otherness.⁷³ Leonardo's story is located between two chapters of real-life

⁷² As Leonardo's story relates, '*philosophers' abstruse words about being and non-being he did not understand their terminology and became bored by their Gods he found them distant and unattainable and without head hands and feet and for this reason unattainable I do not need such impersonal gods he said such gods are superficial and apathetic*' (p. 41).

⁷³ 'Of all writings I love only that which is written with blood. Write with blood: and you will discover that blood is spirit.' In 'Of Reading and Writing', *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. by Hollingdale (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969), p. 67.

events dealing with bodily suffering all inscribed on the female body, the pierced genitals of a young woman being the most characteristic case. Separated and aroused from this horizon of bodily reality, which suffers bleeding, Leonardo's story is insufficient art owing to its highly symbolic functioning. The narrator then continues his wandering in four more chapters uninterrupted by the 'hyperbolic narrative', which vanishes after Leonardo's story. His quest now associates art-making with the discovery of the other as a woman.

Running in the streets and pursued by his nightmares, the narrator meets the woman called Electra, who confirms Leonardo's intertextuality. His quest continues through successive encounters with different women, whores and princesses of fairy tales, which evoke his nostalgia for his mother. He meets Grace, in the eponymous chapter, the name of a girl who dreams of Cinderella's fairy tale, parodied by the narration. It follows another chapter with the same title. The same girl, Grace, becomes involved in an erotic scene with the narrator that becomes a discussion on Alexandrian poetry. The discussion interrupts erotic desire, but only for a while; erotic desire intrudes once again, causing a nightmarish atmosphere. It takes the form of a pregnant woman, a common woman characterized as 'a mourning female Pan', a suggestion of an impregnated man. This androgynous perspective will dominate the whole process of art creation in the books to follow in a very interesting combination of Nietzschean and psychoanalytic thought. Nietzsche's idea that 'For the creator himself to be the child new-born he must also be willing to be the mother and endure the mother's pain' (*Thus spoke Zarathustra*, p. 111), blends with Joyce's androgynous artist and its Trinitarian hypostasis as well as contemporary psychoanalytic metaphors for the genesis of language.

The journey, then, to selfhood and art becomes a return to origins, which questions identities and blurs differences through a harsh dramatization of concepts, blood-letting bodies and liquefied language. The book closes in a thematic *ricorso* recapitulating the

events of the whole book, and with a nostalgia for, and a promise to, the mother that the narrator will become an author. The issue of maternal love, Stephen's '*Amor matris*: subjective and objective' of 'Nestor' (*U*, 2:165), becomes the point of departure for all creativity. The narrator's affirmation addressed to and derived from the mother opens the way to Cheimonas's next book, *I Ekdromi*, which is a journey to the origins of language through a decomposed and distorted family romance.

5.4. *I Ekdromi* (1964)

Cheimonas's second book is an unsettled subject's journey toward self-identity and art reworking Joyce's motif of the questing voyager in modernity. The title, which in Greek means 'the excursion', suggests that this journey takes place through short detours into the world in the form of short narrated stories which allegorically sustain within their texture the history of language itself and a personal psycho-history of a subject coming to terms with language and civilization. It is also an Odyssey toward identity, a return to origins, that is, to all those primary processes which constitute the 'I' through a constant conflict of inner and outer experience.

Leaving Peisistratos and history behind, the 'I' undertakes a journey into language which will set forth all those factors which act upon the subject's formation. The text is written in a fragmentary style which undermines meaning and coherence. However, all the thematic motifs, which we discussed in Joyce's text, are written in the account of a literature which demythologizes story and language. A distorted family romance, the triangular formation of the 'I' which blurs gender identities, an Odyssey which takes place in the crowd and not on the sea, a questing voyager who tries to articulate a voice of his own, a fragmentary rendition of the myth of creation which no longer sustains the coherence of the text and

radiates its part vectors in a centrifugal direction, all these are actualized in the subject's excursion into the world of words. Myth, which sustained Joyce's discursive wandering into literature and language, is dissolved into its constituent parts. The fragment sustains the meaning of the text without revealing the overall structure. A sort of pathology imbues language and narrative whereby different thematic patterns, verbal and visual images, are superimposed in a contradictory manner so that the reader seeking for a realistic rationale finds no point of rest. In this sense, this writing recalls more the world of *FW* than that of *U*.

The discovery of identity through language, in *I Ekdromi*, is inextricably entangled with two thematic frames of reference: death and desire. The former impels the emergence of the 'I', from the ruins of a defunct past, as it were, and the latter generates the Odyssean quest. This quest takes place in a circular route. It moves forward in a stepwise building of self-identity while drawing its constitutional parts in bits and pieces from the past, that is from a personal psychohistory. Such is the function of the mini-stories narrated by 'him', as he tries to assume an identity of his own. The whole text unfolds through an awkward re-employment of the death-rebirth motif entangled with the archetype of the questing voyager, yet in a paralysed mode which questions the very foundation of myth and story as well as of language itself.

The narrative begins with the story of a nameless man, who abandons his mother's house to go on an excursion within the world, to meet with 'them', the anonymous crowd. The puzzling opening of the book states nothing but the contrast of the 'I' with 'them'. The stories which follow, without titles, one intruding into the other, intensify the confusion. The wandering of the reader and the narrator from story to story is the very theme of *I Ekdromi*. As the mini-stories function as allegories for linguistic and literary phenomena, this wandering is an Odyssey into literature and language itself. The theme of the excursion is the long wandering of human logos through history and civilization and its coming to an

impasse sealed by non-existence, non signification, death. Cheimonas sets the stories narrated by him against a highly symbolic background with abstruse speculative terms and malformed language. The incoherence of the narrative stands for the death of logocentric tradition, which necessitates the rebirth of the subject within language. The trip is undertaken in the name of the Father, Lacan's symbolic order, as the story of Damianos Papastephanou suggests, and is reinforced by the copulative desire in language, as the dowser's story shows.⁷⁴ These two stories sustain the meaning of the text and link the formation of identity to the death-rebirth motif, while simultaneously highlighting the family as the dominant force-field, the laboratory where the human mind is created. The inconsistent narrative, the fragmentation of myth, and the paralysed syntax alert us to Cheimonas's assimilation of *FW*. This is also corroborated by the awakening of the narrator in the opening of the text, and by a symbolic representation of the death of the father which seems to allude to the fall of HCE.

5.4.a. The Typographic Rendition

Death of the symbolic order is stated from the very beginning of the text and infects not only narrative and language but also the typographical presentation which knows no chapters, titles, or any signals of differentiation between thematic units. However, through its typographical presentation, the text seems to be divided into twelve sections, unevenly separated by nine capitalized words or phrases partly related to the content of the text that follows them. These words or phrases, which I call 'headers', are introductory to long passages following them and they function as the markers of a thematic alteration.

⁷⁴ This concept derives in a sense from the mythical symbolic father of Freud's *Totem and Taboo*. In terms of Lacan's three orders, it refers not to the real father, nor to the imaginary father (the paternal imago), but to the symbolic father. Lacan links the appearance of the signifier to the father, as author of the law to death.

Functioning as acrostics of the text, they introduce its thematic development as follows: VISIT, ANNOUNCEMENT, POET JULIA'S LIFE, OUT OF THE WALLS, VISIT, HIDE-AND-SEEK, DRONE, THE VILLAGE, THE EXCURSION. Yet their incorporation within the paragraph undermines their authority as headers. Thus the implied continuity of the text develops in parallel to its inconsistency. The 'headers' both differ from, and defer, the development of the narrative, both stating and interrogating their appearance within the text. The 'headers' stand here as signs of a defunct lineage, or a parody of the conventional titles of chapters. In this sense their employment resembles Joyce's boldfaced titles of 'Aeolus', which imitate the form of a newspaper and mock rhetoric styles of the past. The 'headers' are the most striking examples of absence within the text and their function is misleading if not ironic.

This is reinforced by the other thematic vein of the text, which is death, presupposing, if not generating, the subject's entrance into language and the world. It is also the principal theme of the mini-stories, complying with the aforementioned narrative strategies and thematically reiterating their psycholinguistic operations. The mini-stories do not simply lack, but declare their detachment from reality. They unfold in inertia and inactivity, starting and ending abruptly without heroes or antiheroes, in fact without characters at all. The fictional appearances, which I call *personae*, are but the relics of the classic novel's characters. Their action is limited or non-existent, they do not even have real names in the first half of the book. Only their profession or metaphorical function characterizes them. Thus the participants of the mini-stories are the mother, the doctor, the nurse, the deceased, the patient, the mediator, the poet, the surgeon, the dowser, the psychoanalyst etc. Identities, then, are largely a matter of fictitious and factitious synecdoche, as in Joyce's *FW*.⁷⁵ Their

⁷⁵In *FW*, a man holding an earwigger is known thereafter as Earwigger/Earwicker. An assailant is simply, a "cad with a pipe"; a crowd consists of loafers (cigars in mouths, hands in pockets), pawnbrokers (three gold balls), hunters (rifles), ladies (in sedan chairs), school boys (blue coats) (42. 17 – 43.21). John Gordon, '*FW*': *A Plot Summary* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1986), pp. 122-123.

activity is either metaphorically or literally related to the attribute conveyed by their characterization, and all of them function metaphorically, as the participants of a great allegory, the emancipation of identity, the articulation of a voice out of the ruins of a defunct and obsolete legacy. Likewise, the names, which appear only after the fifth 'header', VISIT, seem to convey meaning in most cases by virtue of their sounds or etymology. As we shall see, Nora and Damianos Papastephanou, Dionysia (from Dionysus), Agis (meaning the leader, deriving from the verb 'ago' (ἄγω) in ancient Greek) signify through the etymology of their names rather than through a structural interrelation or deportment within the text: they are not characters but signs, signifiers empty of action and full of suggestion. Such a function of names is an immediate derivative of *FW*, where Mutt is mute or Jeffmutte is deaf-mute (*FW*, 16.14), or Here Comes Everybody is the universal man. In this dream-like scenery, the mini-stories have no existence of their own. They are encased within the narration that 'he' narrates when he pays his first visit to the house of 'them', as he tries to assume an identity through the narration of successive stories. He barely achieves it since his voice always blends with the voices of the participants of his stories and the voice of an invisible narrator. This blending of identities and stories also harks back to Joyce's deliberately confused world of *FW*, where 'there are sordidly tales within tales, you clearly understand that', and the narrative follows the process of the dream-work (*FW*, 522.5). Blending and blurring of identities is the most striking characteristic which sustains the heterogeneity of both utterance and subject while simultaneously affecting gender and sexuality.

5.4.b. The Ambiguity of Origins: A Distorted Family Romance

The incomplete and unshaped self awakens into the external world. In an embryonic state, revealing from the very beginning its heterogeneity, 'he', an unnameable subject, without gender or social identity, attempts contact with external reality. It is a silent and undefined existence in the text. He arises out of the phenomenal horizon of 'they', yet unknown and non-captured by his own perception. The Greek language allows this uncertainty since verbs can have meaning without overt grammatical subjects.⁷⁶ The opening of the book presents the symbolic order through the third person plural and then places the subject, the third person singular, amongst them. This peculiar opening is marked by the presence of a female image framed in a picture, Nora's portrait, the mother, and of an androgynous man, dying from a female disease, breast cancer. In fact, the ambivalence of gender introduces the narrative's ambiguity. The death issue conveys a close relationship between the text and the human body, recognized as feminine. We learn that the subject is masculine some sentences into the text. Very soon after, we read the first name of the text which belongs to a woman framed in a portrait. Nora's pictorial representation and name, which in itself suggests a story of its own, is juxtaposed to Damianos Papastephanou's story. Both of them are allegorical presences relating to family and origins. Nora's presence is marked by three elements which relate to language and origins. The first concerns the style of its writing, in a poetic diction with surrealist elements, as the bird suckling from her eyes suggest, its musicality and rhythm separating it from the rest of the text.⁷⁷ Secondly, Nora has a

⁷⁶ '[They] are good' is the first sentence. '[He] goes' is the second. The reader knows neither who 'they' are nor who 'he' is.

⁷⁷ The text could be read as a poem, its rhythm sustained by the short clauses abruptly cut by punctuation and the rhythmic repetition of her name. Consider the following: 'Now Nora stands in front of the table. Nora sits on the sofa she has short white hair. Her tights make wrinkles over the heels on her shoulders there is some dandruff for me to remember. Nora's eyes and voice. Solemn Nora. Nora stands up and goes towards the 'phone. Nora's figure on the crystal. Nora speaks and laughs. The big, low, square table on the carpet. The tray with the drinks. Nora enters

disfigurement of the body, she has a snake instead of an arm. Thirdly, all her characteristics, the caring attitude toward him and her white hair, suggesting age, give her maternal properties.

Nora in the portrait Nora has a snake instead of an arm. When she broke it and it was swollen and she felt it as an alien and cold thing like a snake that sprouted out of her shoulder. Nora stands up and crosses the room. Nora holds a glass of cognac. Nora points to the wall Nora speaks she said [the responsibilities].⁷⁸ Nora wears a black blouse. [...] Nora says I worry about you. A woman with bowed head and a bird embraced her and it poked its beak into her head and it suckles from her eyes.⁷⁹ The bird as embrace and death. He laughed loudly. One day he woke up very early in the morning. On opening his eyes his mind started working with a special clarity in spite of the deep sleep of the whole night. He was watching the furniture and the objects of the room with tranquility and with a tender fastidiousness and he decided to go to the mother and yet he could not wake up and he was resting motionless on the bed with a bright mind and unreasonably content. There was a knock on the door and he stood up and he went first to look at himself in the mirror. (My emphases, *Ekdromi*, pp. 8-9)

Nora's framed feminine presence, her snake-like arm, and the mirror, precede the awakening of the subject. He comes to life with his mind stimulated by his eyes. The story begins, marked by a strong bodily function. His awakening conveys a childish embarrassment caused by contact with the unknown external world. This embarrassment generates his desire to return to a previous stage relating to the mother.⁸⁰ Two feminine elements mark the opening: Nora's name, and the mother. They intervene between 'he' and 'they', the crowd and 'he'. Woman appears as a medium between the subject and the world just as the female body stands as a medium between Father and Son in theology and in the

laughing cheerfully'. It also recalls André Breton's poem, 'L'union Libre', 1931, a poem which refers to his wife with striking metaphors of female masculinity.

⁷⁸ Brackets indicate the speech of the persona not distinguished by any punctuation.

⁷⁹ A similar scene occurs in Pentzikis's *Kyria Ersi*: in her dream wild birds suckle from her breasts (p. 42).

⁸⁰ This opening of the text also recalls the opening of *P*, although the subject here awakens within a world of things instead of words which is the case with *P*. Stephen comes into a world of words shaped in a fairy tale and a nursery rhyme sung by his father, naming him as 'baby tuckoo', and accompanied by the mother's playing of the piano, introducing the musicality-rhythm relating to the human body. However, we must refer to Cheimonas's idea that the

philosophy of Western metaphysics, as in Joyce's comedy (Stephen's theory of postcreation). Nora has no identity, she is merely a name, a signifier, framed in a portrait, an absence pre-existing the awakening of the ego. As such she is part of the world of primary fantasies which precede existence, precede even the beholding in the mirror, as the text suggests.

Comprising both masculine (the snake-like arm) and feminine elements (the snake sprang from the swollen arm, as if pregnant), Nora's metaphorical function points to an ambiguity of origins; to the subject's primary fantasy that his mother had a penis, Freud's phallic mother.⁸¹ This is re-affirmed by the presence of a dead man with breasts, in the first mini-story to follow, but also by the meaning encapsulated in Nora's name. Her name strongly recalls Pentzikis's Ruit Horas (suggesting the passage of time) and the name of Joyce's wife. In Cheimonas's language, encompassing ancient and foreign elements, where names convey multifarious meanings and the sound of the word constitutes meaningful alliterations, this name could be read as No - (h)ora : a combination of negativity in English and of the word 'time' in Greek, 'Ωρα'. Nora as a signifier, can be construed as timelessness or before time. This is far from a mere assumption of ours, since in the words of prince Leonardo, in *Peisistratos*, father is time and mother matter. Thus Nora, as one of the partially desirable objects of infancy, as mother, pre-exists the awakening of the 'he' in order to signify the subject's disentangling from his maternal origins. Embedded in a text with rhythmic incantation, and musicality, her presence recalls Kristeva's semiotic 'chora', a place of uncertainty, '[...] unnameable, improbable, hybrid, anterior to naming, to the One, to the Father, and consequently maternally connoted [...]'. It relates to 'prephonological, one could say pre-predicative stages, anterior to "the mirror stage"'

world is not constituted of things but of words. Thus, the 'things' that surround the subject are signifiers alluding to things.

⁸¹ The concept is developed in Freud's paper on 'Fetishism' (1927), published in Freud, *On Sexuality* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991), pp. 345-358.

(*Desire*, pp. 133-134).⁸² Indeed Nora's presence, her dreamy presentation with surrealist overtones, precedes the subject's mirroring. It represents this pre-predicative operation which is ceaselessly activated in Cheimonas, and breaks through his abstruse symbolism, rupturing syntax and grammar but also connoting a poetic vein and sustaining this 'other' meaning of the text.⁸³ It is thematized and dramatized through disfigured bodies or female bodies which bleed, their evoked blood sustaining and feeding the poetics of incoherence.

Nora, then, also functions as a channel of the subject's transference from a state of latency in which he is 'unreasonably content' owing to his dreams; from his fantasy about a phallic mother to the real mother. He decides to go to the mother. This is interrupted by a knock on the door, the intrusion of sound, which provokes his looking at himself in the mirror. Two unknown persons at his door ask him his name, and give him an invitation to a ceremony, which is an invitation into the world, into society ordered by the law of the father. In order to communicate with them he offers them his gold ring, thus submitting to loss through sacrifice of one of his possessions. Then the mother literally pursues him as he makes his way into the crowd, not as a ghostly figure like Stephen's dead mother, but as a live presence pleading with him to stay with her.⁸⁴

This moment is also the beginning of *I Ekdromi*, starting with a new chapter entitled VISIT. He visits an unknown and crowded house. He defecates in the store-room of the house while the crowd pushes the store-room door open, and then, to get over his embarrassment, he tells them the Damianos Papastephanou story.

[Wait I am going to narrate] he says in a rush and he waves his arms. [What are you going to narrate]

they shout. [I am going to describe an incident to you. You have to believe me although you will say

⁸² Kristeva breaks with Lacan in the acceptance of those pre-predicative operations in language. Kristeva's semiotic activity, related to the maternal and femininity deals with a pre-discursive domain which constitutes the subject's heterogeneity, consequently the androgynous artist and the poetic language. Apparently Kristeva's androgynous artist is closer to Joyce's, and as we shall see, to Cheimonas's subject.

⁸³ See *Peisistratos* for Cheimonas's reference to otherness with regard to language.

⁸⁴ '[Mother] he cried and stretched his arms out from behind the barriers and he saw her in the crowd trying to reach him. [The child the child] cried the mother and she was struggling to reach him' (*I Ekdromi*, p. 12).

that it is a bit excessive. His name was Damianos Papastephanou remember Papastephanou. Later I went to see I found nurses in the corridor. [...] They say [he is not here and we have only here. Damianos Papastephanou he died from breast cancer]. [But he is a man]. [Do not men have breasts?] I go next door. Naked he is on the marble skinny. He had he had swollen breasts. Like a fat woman with wide brown nipples and he watches me tamely. He moves one breast and he points [look]. He points and he turns his head towards the wall. A small red spot. One of those that we call malignant spots [...]. (*I Ekdromi*, pp. 13-14)

This first story narrated by him deals with the death of an old man with feminine characteristics, a womanly man whose name suggests paternal authority. Once again, the name conveys a meaning of its own through the body's disfigurement. Papastephanou is a compound name constituted by two words: 'Papa' which means father and priest, and 'stephanou' which is the genitive of the word 'stephanos' meaning wreath, simultaneously a symbol of a trophy in poetic contests in ancient Greece and of sacrifice for the prospective victim in homicides especially Christ's crown of thorns.⁸⁵ Papastephanou, being the only surname of the book, denotes family and patriarchal authority. It means the father of stephanos, which is also the equivalent of the English name, recalling Joyce's hero Stephen Dedalus.⁸⁶ The surname conveys a divine symbolic function alluding to Logos, to the name-of-the-father, in Lacan's term, to symbolic order.⁸⁷ The dead body of a womanly man initiates the entrance of the subject into language, its old age suggesting paternity. That is perhaps the reason why Aristinos claims that *I Ekdromi* is 'an exit to the world impelled by the death of the father' (p. 56).

⁸⁵ See also Stephen's explanation of 'what's in a name' in 'Scylla and Charybdis' when he comes to his own name, 'Autontimorumenos. Bous Stephanoumenos' (*U*, 9: 938), suggesting the son's sacrificial position in relation to the father.

⁸⁶ Within Cheimonas's language play it would not be absolutely arbitrary if one considered the name as an allusion to Joyce as the literary progenitor of Stephanos (Stephen) in relation to Papa (father). This is also supported by the claim of the nurse's interlocutor that 'never before had such a thing come to Greece' (p. 14), thus suggesting the literary influence on the text.

⁸⁷ This is reinforced by the first name Damianos which is a Christian name possibly alluding to the Order of Saints Cosmo and Damian, a religious order of martyrs which was especially charged with the care of pilgrims in Palestine in the Middle Ages, *The New Century Cyclopedia of Names*, ed. by Clarence L. Barnhart, 3vols (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1954), III, p. 3031. Also Psellos mentions that the Saints Kosmas and Damianos practiced medicine for the poor, and therefore the name Damianos may well be an allusion to the author's profession which was medicine (*Chronografia*, p. 143).

In fact the entrance of the subject into language is represented in the scattered pieces of a distorted family romance, whose overall design appears in the Dowser's copulative story of the parturition of logos but also in the symbolism conveyed by the names. Through a 'brute' dramatization of fantasies about the myth of genesis suggestive of an early psycho-history in the life of the individual, Cheimonas builds his myth in a centrifugal movement from its core story. The dramatization of the fantasies of both Freud's phallic mother and Lacan's 'name-of-the-father' harks back to the discoveries of anthropological studies with regard to the origins of religion and God, which are written back into a psychoanalytical account of a personal psycho-history of the individual. The existence of an omnipotent, jealous, vengeful and aggressive father of the clan, by whose murder the sons assumed authority and access to the women, as well as his replacement by totemism and mystic sacrifices (the killing and eating of animals) and the taboos on murder and incest, are all themes which Freud developed in *Totem and Taboo*.⁸⁸ It is this mythic substratum which sustains Cheimonas's anti-theological subversion, his struggle against logocentricity. In line, however, with his project of demythologization, the fragmentation of the text itself is suggestive of the father's murder. In 'man-consuming' visions, as the author suggests, he constructs a phantasmagoria of murderous scenes, montaged in the mode of Joyce's Circean episode and with a Beckettian uncanniness, in a setting overshadowed by death which is defined as murder. The text has an unusually large number of women dead from disease or murder. Death is the recurrent motif of *I Ekdromi* lurking behind each mini-story and is defined as murder: 'there is no death that is not murder'.⁸⁹ However, all the murders refer to women. The text goes on without a capital letter at the beginning of the sentence as follows:

⁸⁸ Freud used Atkinson's research in New Caledonia and Darwin's analyses on the state affairs in the primal horde. Freud, 'Totem and Taboo' in *The Origins of Religion* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990), pp. 43-159.

⁸⁹ 'The old man says there is no death that was not murder and every death. A rock falls upon people and kills one by chance and another rock falls. Now by lottery we will find the one who will continue and will take his place within the world and he will become that which he was before' (*I Ekdromi*, p. 96).

between her legs are pressed her two naked little children. A woman! cries the nurse. She is alive answers the old man. And who may I ask shouts the nurse who will become what she was who is going to take her place in the world. She did not die says the old man. [...] They bring the woman and they have dressed her in the clothes of the deceased man. [...] And I who believed shouts the gravedigger and I who was glad that we have almost the same god and I realized a sort of trinity even though you here call it great murder. The old man says it is not God. The great necessity to exist means that he does not exist. *Illness war. (I Ekdromi, p. 97)*

The living woman's body dressed up in a deceased man's clothes is the counterpoint to Damianos Papastephanou's womanly body. Simultaneously, the theme of consubstantiality is introduced by reference to the Trinity, albeit interrogatively. It is the dead female body and the feminine elements on a man's body, though, which sustain the ironic undoing of Lacan's terminology. Cheimonas disentangles Lacan's concept of the name-of-the-father, which Lacan links to the signifier of the Father, as the author of Law, to death,

even to the murder of the father, thus showing that although this murder is the fruitful moment of the debt through which the subject binds himself for life to the Law, the symbolic Father is, so far as he signifies this Law, the dead father.⁹⁰

The juxtaposition of the fantasy of the phallic mother and a womanly father renders the parental agency bisexual, as with Joyce's 'Ma's da. Da's ma. Madas.' (*FW*, 496. 20-21). This ambiguity of gender sustains the ambivalence of language and narrative. In undoing the baroque stylishness of Lacan's speculative field, Cheimonas proceeds with meandering literary and philosophical loans on the issue of the death of the father, enmeshing literary motifs into philosophical concepts and subsequently dissolving them into uncanny pictorial representations. *U's* motif of seeking for the father is transformed into a quest for a new language. Besides, the death of the father inciting a compulsory exit from the family and an entry into the 'world' is the theme of Samuel Beckett's *Premier Amour*. Beckett's hero

⁹⁰ Jacques Lacan, 'On the possible treatment of psychosis', *Écrits* trans. by Alan Sheridan (London: Routledge, 1977), pp. 179-225 (p. 199).

associates his marriage with his father's death, and his ability to narrate a story comes after this event.⁹¹ The act of writing, associated with the death of the father, a symbolic father who stands for language itself, foregrounds the Homeric-Joycean motif of seeking for the father, the desire for re-capturing him, or as Joyce, in Stephen's Shakespeare theory puts it, to become himself his own father (*U*, 9:875). Joyce also recognizes in this death Christianity's devouring desire for the dead father, where the fundamental Christian myth of love for the dead father is ritualized in the cannibal meal of the Eucharist which Bloom understands as 'eating bits of a corpse' (*U*, 5:350). In fact Cheimonas's presentation of a dead paternal figure with breasts, subtly introduces the issue of a breast-feeding father as the distant echo of this primitive meal of the sons.⁹² This also echoes Joyce's fallen father of *FW* who becomes a sacrificial meal. He is a 'joint on a desh', a loaf of 'Kennedy's bread', a fish, salmon, or ling, whale, grampus, thunderfish and is in general somebody's supper: 'that meal's dead off summan, schlook, schlice and goodridhirring'. While his sacrificial blood is 'a glass of [...] foamous olde Dobbelin ayle' (*FW*, 7. 8-12).⁹³

However, more in line with Beckett, Cheimonas associates his story with anal fixation rather than the oral sadistic, as the narrator's defecation suggests. This fully accords with the Beckettian hero of *Premier Amour*, who spends his time in the closet and associates his telling of the story with excreta, Joyce's Shem's urinating ink. To assume his father's place, to write in the name of the father, the narrator has to dispense with his body, his law and his

⁹¹ Samuel Beckett, *First Love*, trans. by the author (London: Calder & Boyars, 1973), p. 7.

⁹² At this point there is a very interesting intersection of chains of thoughts from different authorities on the same subject. The relation of food to excreta, a well known Freudian analysis deriving from psychoanalytic and anthropological observation, appears in Bataille's *Eroticism*, apparently owing to his relationship with psychoanalytic studies at large. It is associated with primitive societies and Christianity. Kristeva, whose theory of poetic language also highlights the bodily dynamics underlying language, has reworked this idea via the notion of abjection, in her book *Powers of Horror*, and informs us that her authority on this issue is Bataille. The comparison of the Eucharist to the cannibalistic rites of eating human flesh, is an allusion to anthropological studies, and to the ritual totem meal whereby the members of the clan incorporate the man or the sacred animal into themselves in a participatory process that assures their consubstantial identity. The Eucharist is a survival of this primitive rite. Joyce by poetic licence, within the economy and implicitness of his text, sustains all these notions in Bloom's jocosserious ruminations, anticipating the theoretical connections of Bataille's anthropology and Kristeva's neo-Freudianism and Cheimonas's relevant dramatization of these concepts.

⁹³ Danis Rose & John O' Hanlon, *Understanding 'FW': A Guide to the Narrative of James Joyce's Masterpiece* (London & New York: Garland, 1982), pp. 4-13.

language. Writing is parricidal as Derrida claims, or in Kristeva's terms: 'Assumption of self through the dead father turns the banished writer into a father in spite of himself'.⁹⁴ This sort of negativity predominates in the language and narrative, sustaining within its elisions the trace of the dead father, the symbolic. The undoing of language shows its paraphasic character, in Cheimonas's terms. Symbolic language is renounced and by renouncing this introjected superego of the father, the narrator can proceed in the copulative operation of language, its re-birth through the story in terms of sexual union.⁹⁵ The subject starts his 'immoral' detour into language to write anew the multiplicity of himself in the polymorphic, polygraphic, polyglottic mélange of his narrative, in a Joycean manner which unsettles sexuality and subjectivity in the androgynous space of literature.

The whole narrative, then, is constructed by the deployment of two modes of signifying practice: elision, which takes part in the ironic undoing of the father's law of reason, and intrusion, that is surplus redoing of the omitted, the re-incarnation of logos in the feminine body of the (m)other's son. The former signifies the absence of the paternal body, the disfigurement of all language and symbol. Not only is death thematized but the text declares its own death through incomprehensibility.

This spectacle of death obliterated you and the he died you shouted was not an announcement or for you to become conscious of. Imperative and impatient out of the most personal fear. From this you murdered him. Reasoning is as clear as a small syllabified phrase along with reasoning. To end fear you came to fear. To end death you made death. What ridicule for the language. (*I Ekdromi*, p. 79)

⁹⁴ 'The primary obsessed man never sees his father as dead. The corpse under his eyes is the waste-object, endlessly expected from the first cries on, from the first faeces on, from the first words on; [...] This cadaverous object finally allows its son to have a "real" relationship with the world, [...] But the Other, the third person father, is not that particular dead body. It is death; it is the meaning of the narrative of the son who never enunciated himself as anything else, save for and by virtue of this stretched void of paternal death, as ideal and inaccessible to any living being as it might be', 'Father, Love, and Banishment', in *Desire*, pp. 150, 151.

⁹⁵ Or, as Joyce says, to become 'an androgynous angel, being wife unto himself' (*U*, 9:1052). Freightened with this androgynous origin of 'A false father set up for the sole purpose of avoiding phantasmatically the mother not having a phallus, of avoiding her being genital, her *coming*. This father is a mother. Phallic. The father in reality is a name but no one is more afraid of that than the idealist'. Philippe Sollers, *Sur le matérialisme; De l'atomisme à la dialectique révolutionnaire* 1974, p. 61, quoted from Colin MacCabe, *James Joyce and the Revolution of the Word* (London: Macmillan Press, 1978), p. 49.

The latter, on the other hand, in terrifying appearances of disfigured bodies (Nora), signifies the intrusion of this other, the instinct maternally connoted (the (m)other), always repressed and suppressed within the economy of logocentricity but always present, assimilated, appropriated. It intrudes through the gaps of utterance, in the lifting of veils of meaning and signification to sustain on the other side of the coin the desire for language, always directed toward the paternal, the symbolic, as a corporeal medium between the son and the father which makes language bleed, as Molly's monologue menstruates its meaning in gaps and incoherence. The malformation of the syntax, the repetition of surplus details, the obliteration of any distinctive element among the interchanging voices, the overall lack of commas which leads the sentence to suffocation, and the short pieces of sentence, with or without verb, which are violently thwarted by full stops, another way to reveal the breathless operation of the syntax, are the outcome of this peculiar union, which blurs identities and renders language incomprehensible.

5.4.c. Writing the 'other': Desire and Fear

Kristeva's analysis of the poetic subject in a process of becoming strikingly resembles Joyce's theory of the androgynous artist, who is his own father and a wife unto himself. She says:

If it is true that there would unavoidably be a speaking subject, since the signifying text exists, it is nonetheless evident that this subject, in order to tally with its heterogeneity, must be, let us say, a questionable *subject-in-process*. [...] The unsettled and questionable subject of poetic language (for whom the word is never uniquely sign) maintains itself at the cost of reactivating this repressed instinctual, maternal element. (*Desire*, pp. 135-6)

Heterogeneity and reactivation of the repressed desire generate the moment of ambiguity in language, and in all narrative which maintains and announces as its progenitor the androgynous artist. The 'androgynous' of Joyce, Woolf, Nietzsche, Kristeva, Derrida, all place the act of creation in the male womb of imagination, in the moment of ambiguity between one identity and another.

'Speak, you! Are you struck dumb? You are the link between nations and generations. Speak, woman, sacred lifegiver' (*U*, 15:4647-49), says Bloom to a girl in the 'Circe' episode, the place of Joycean phantasmagoria which parodies the theatre of the unconscious. Bloom, a mostly womanly man, who gives birth in the same episode and also has a touch of the artist about him, evokes this otherness to come out as a voice. Similarly, as discussed in previous chapters, both Xefloudas and Pentzikis based their art-making and process of becoming on the evocation of the voice of the other as woman, the lifegiver. Cheimonas also moves in this line, but gives a firmer credibility to the heterogeneity of the artist in the moment of his utterance. His texts, not representing or corresponding to reality, are staged in the theatre of the unconscious, in between reality and fantasy. They presuppose the presence of this other, the sexually different, hitherto excluded by the oneness, the sameness of the one, of the Father, in meaning and signification. To evoke this otherness, Cheimonas subjects all reasoning to surgery and eventually to death.

Therefore, the journey of *I Ekdromi* unfolds in a peculiar thematization of the female body which is summoned up to incarnate the new-born logos offering, once more, its blood and flesh in uncanny bodily representations of the act of creation. In Cheimonas, woman, the 'lifegiver', becomes the dismembered bodies of his discourse, violated, obliterated, always with a blemish, but also as the violent, terrible mother who seals the entrance of ambiguity in his narrative and language.

An outcast from the social assembly, when 'he' ends his narration of Damianos Papastephanou's story, he has an acute psychosomatic stroke as he shivers and is ready to collapse (*I Ekdromi*, p. 14). The people of the house, 'the others', are not angry any more. And one of them decides to tell a story about a friend of his who meets a very beautiful woman with a mole on her jaw. The mole was cancer and this disease stimulated his erotic excitement. The visitor, who is no other than 'he', narrates again the story of Julia. She became a poet because she suffered from tuberculosis and subsequently died. The hospital story recurs intermittently in the text and deals with the operation on a dying person which is obstructed by the loss of a false surgical instrument, namely a knocker. The knocker introduces the importance of sound and suggests the allegorical character of the operation: sound operates on the body of logos. Subsequently, a weird story of a couple copulating in a room follows. The intercourse takes place in the form of sounds, words and gestures which are exchanged between the man and the woman.⁹⁶ The sexual union stands as an allegory for the genesis of language which is presented as a teratogenesis. A dowser intervenes and, with his stick and his ability to discover metals or water under the ground, Cheimonas's 'mineral words', he discovers the evil of this genesis enveloped in the woman's body which he threatens to destroy. The symbolic copulation reveals a biblical substratum announcing the forthcoming death.

A section of narrative follows which deals with his reveries as he strolls around an old neighbourhood. Death intrudes through the 'forgotten and well-known words' that capture his memory and he arrives again at the house where, 'they' sit motionless as a painter's model, but from their attire he realizes that they have become kings. This, being another allegory for authorized logos and symbolic order, conveys death in their static depiction. The following narrative discussing the theme of the mediator presents different and

⁹⁶ The copulation without bodily intercourse, strongly recalls Joyce's 'copulation without population' (*U*, 14:1422). The teratogenesis is possibly an allusion to the birth abnormalities of 'Oxen of the Sun', taking place in a hospital and dealing with the parturition of language.

contrasting opinions about what a mediator can be. The development of the argument of Dionysia, who in fact soliloquizes on the subject, recalls Watt's syllogisms about what a thing can be. This mini-story ends with a messianic allusion related to the concept of the mediator and the medium, in Derrida's terms, introducing the Agis story, which is an allegory of the crucifixion of Jesus. As the text goes on it becomes clearer that it allegorically deals with the history of logos as a process deriving from and resulting in death. Emperor Julian's story, a farce without laughter, a burlesque which parodies both pagan and Christian religions, results in the emperor's death following the breaking of his pagan idol. Abjection overwhelms the story which was announced to be a farce. Dismembering and morbidity seals the end of logocentricism incarnated in both the personae of the priest and the pagan Emperor Julian. The narrative continues with stories all within the same atmosphere of metaphors and allegories dealing with the death of logos and the death caused by logos.

In this ambience, Cheimonas's otherness appears in terrifying women-presences which accompany the disfigurement of his discourse. Surging from the repository of masculine fantasies and desire, these female characters intrude in the gaps of the discourse and with aggressive action or bloody images sustain the equivocality of the paralysed syntax: Freud's castrated women with their *stigma indelibile* (Nora and the woman with the cancerous blemish), phallic mothers and castrated mothers. Female characters also echo Nietzsche's woman seductress and liar, (as the surgeon's wife with a crown-fetish on her head in the hospital story, p. 18) artist, histrionic and hysteric (as in Agis's story),⁹⁷ and the Dionysian woman who appears in Dionysia's story as a girl with two mouths (p. 46) and as the mediator who forms 'each relationship in triplicate' (p. 44). As mediator she is both a normal affirmation and an angelic absence 'with something supernatural that creates

⁹⁷ 'Finally women. If we consider the whole history of women [that history which oscillates between histrionics and hysterics will come to be read a little later as a chapter in the history of truth], are they not obliged first of all, and above all to be actresses?' (*Joyful Wisdom*, fragment 361).

obstacles' and a space encompassing all people. But she also echoes Nietzsche's thought that the real world, unattainable to the idea, 'becomes woman, it becomes Christian'; this female mediator becomes the church, whose 'spiritualization of passion' made it hostile to life, a castrating woman.⁹⁸ The woman with a mask on her face, a seductive simulation of masculinity, affirms Agis's presence.⁹⁹ This affirmative woman names the messianic man, Agis. She discovers the scars on his hands, alluding to Christ's crucifixion, and in a parody of Christ's crucifixion, she 'crucifies' him with a pin, while she says: 'Now I have made you Agis' (p. 59).

Cheimonas re-inscribes the theological concept of the woman as a medium between the Father and the son in the domain of a literature which in itself stands between philosophy and science, the self and its other, truth and non-truth, presence and non-presence.¹⁰⁰ Such is the function of Dionysia and her story, which proceeds with wounds on the female face, double mouths and images of bleeding. Cheimonas plays with philosophical concepts similar to Derrida's hymen, invagination, dissemination, tympan, or his idea of Nietzsche as the pregnant philosopher.¹⁰¹ Derrida's terms, elicited from the body's anatomy, introduce the androgynous into the domain of philosophy. By the same token, Cheimonas carries this bifurcation to the borderlines of philosophy and literature, philosophy and science, reproducing *ad infinitum* the confluent crisscrossing pattern of our era, whose invisible creator is no more the one, God, but a shattered self, androgynous and always pregnant. It

⁹⁸ 'The church combats the passions with excision in every sense of the word: its practice, its "cure" is *castration*', 'Morality as Anti-nature', in *Twilight of the Idols*, trans. by R. J. Hollingale (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978), pp. 40, 42. 'Sie wird Weib'.

⁹⁹ On woman's mask as man's desire see Nietzsche, *Joyful Wisdom*, fragment 405 and Derrida, 'Spurs: Nietzsche's style' in *A Derrida Reader: Between the Blinds*, ed. by Peggy Kamuf (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), pp. 353-377.

¹⁰⁰ The medium 'that both sows confusion *between* opposites and stands *between* the opposites "at once"'. What counts here is the between, the in-between-ness [...]', Derrida's hymen elicited from the dissection of the female body and re-inscribed in the vocabulary of philosophy. Derrida, 'The Double Session' in *Dissemination*, trans. By Barbara Johnson (London: The Athlone Press, 1981) p. 212.

¹⁰¹ 'The hymen "takes place" in the "inter-", in the space between desire and fulfilment, between perpetration and its recollection'. It is the moment of the undecidable which 'outwits and undoes all ontologies, all philosophemes, all manner of dialectics'. Derrida uses this term as an attempt to sexualize philosophy, not as a characteristic attribute of femininity but as a term belonging to both sexes as he explains in 'Choreographies' in *A Derrida Reader: Between*

could be called womb envy, appropriation of the other, of the mother, the breaking of the semiotic within the symbolic, invagination and by many other terms coined by contemporary psychoanalytic or philosophical thought. However, the common denominator in all these concepts is the issue of parturition. The issue is a pregnant body, androgynous and able to perform a literal or figurative birth.¹⁰² Such is the dowser's story within which Cheimonas stages his parturition of logos in terms of voice and gesture to sustain his phenomenological hypothesis of what real language signifies, of what he considers as paraphasic and what is enacted by the body's voice. The story is also an allegory of the origins of language.

The story begins with a reference to the literary genre expressed through the words of the nurse (of the hospital story). The process of articulating is presented as the sexual game between a man and a woman. Their sexual intercourse takes place through an incoherent dialogue constituted by words and syllables. The whole presentation has a theatrical tone introduced by the nurse's reference to Chekhov.¹⁰³ 'He' starts the narration of the dowser's story, with a definition of what a dowser is:

One who knows that he is a genius and yet cannot show it and has all the special circumstances that belong to a life cursed and blessed by the nature that is genius. The only thing is that he cannot create and show himself. Like a voice in a blocked flute. (My emphasis, *I Ekdromi*, p. 35)

This sterile man needs a woman 'rare in psyche and spirit as rare as a woman can be' (p. 36) to recover his fertility. A strange couple, secluded from the external world, perform a purported copulation:

the Blinds, ed. Peggy Kamuf (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), p. 453. See also Derrida, 'Spurs: Nietzsche's style', *ibid*, pp. 353-377.

¹⁰² And this is hardly a new concept if one recalls Odysseus's subterfuge, a decoy for the resolving of the Trojan war: an impregnated horse delivering soldiers from its belly, a false appearance imitating and dissimulating nature.

¹⁰³ '[I like theatre] said the nurse. She turned her head and she said to herself sentimentally. [Poor uncle Vanya don't cry. We are going to listen to the angels and look at the stars far away and our evil and pain will disappear in the love that will conquer the whole world][...]' p. 35.

The strange couple retreat from the world and lock themselves away and they live in tremendous tension. They preserve it calculatingly and daily and they achieve this by constant speech and gestures a volcanic tension in this way they create the condition. A feigned passion and each time the exhausting dialogue ends up in a slow fluttering of gestures. From time to time abrupt words burst out of their mouth and syllables. They try to be revealing and ribald but the only thing that they achieve is an incoherence constituted by rudimentary ideas and concepts and hints of words and gestures and all these show that they suspect some basic fault and that in this way they try to find the fault and they start again and again in detail all their behaviour in the discourse and in movement. The place that the fault is hidden is the source of the problem. First the woman made this comment. During those spasms of endless poetry because this process resembles poetry since the mode is the same. (My emphases underlined, *I Ekdromi*, p. 36)

This feigned copulation introduces the copulative character of poetic language which dissolves language into vocalization, morphemes, syllables, and words, strongly recalling Kristeva's definition of poetic language. The incoherence is created by a stress or a tension of erotic excitement. The genetic function of language and utterance hinges on desire and aggression.

Their union [...] is the main purpose love is lost inexperienced and hardly noticed and a mechanical stimulation of instincts during that fight and everybody breathlessly experiences the ultimate loneliness and suddenly the woman thoughtlessly says [it seems as if we are looking for a fundamental fault that is the reason].¹⁰⁴ The man is startled and impressed. [Yes] says he [and it becomes an obsession and poetry loses its unconsciousness and it becomes a merciless mental ordeal]. They plan and they repeat carefully and after each word and gesture they look at each other in case the other has noticed something]. Then the man says [no and perhaps we ought to start in a different way and not in one word or gesture but in a defined sequence of words and gestures through a certain combination and maybe in sequence house leg Birmingham ridge or leg Birmingham ridge house or in sequence we touch the table and then the wall and after that your forehead or first the wall and afterwards the table and it may be that here is the key and the fallacy is revealed amidst the

¹⁰⁴ I use the brackets to indicate the speech of the persona not distinguished by any punctuation within the text.

glowing mystery of magic]. They start new trials of thousands and thousands of combinations of words and gestures which they correct and restructure again. [...] They start destroying the house and the woman crawls because her belly is already rather swollen. (*I Ekdromi*, pp. 36-38)

Written down in bodily terms, Logos is announced as the offspring of the union of a woman and a man. It is an offspring whose neutrality is declared as well as its intellectuality and reason. Though produced out of an overall incomprehensibility, it is predestined to free the progenitor's blocked voice via his weird union with a woman. This genesis enacts inversion, confusion and fusion of sounds, words, and gestures. It is an attempt at producing phenomenology's 'gestural meaning' residing in the word, the liberation of the 'voice in a blocked flute'. The 'feigned' passion which generates words and gestures introduces the allegory of pregnancy in the woman's body. However, by an original fault, like original sin, which looms over this sexual intercourse of words and gestures, the union and the creation depend on the appearance of reason. It is reasonable thought which generates the madness and joins man and woman in a strange union. This is reminiscent of the union of Sam and Watt, in Beckett's *Watt*, in the asylum where, joined together with the front parts of their bodies, belly to belly, they move one forward and the other backward. The union of Watt and Sam, resembling Plato's spheres in the *Symposium*, the androgynous human gender destroyed by Zeus because of its lascivious life, releases evil as a psycholinguistic malignancy in Watt's language. Watt reverses the order of words, letters and sentences, and thus does not allow Sam to comprehend parts of his story in Mr Knott's house. Watt's inversion also encompasses his guilt expressed in his begging pardon from Sam: 'Pardon beg' or even 'Geb nodrap'.¹⁰⁵ Although this situation is clearly related to mental disturbance and the asylum, Beckett's word-play is also a derivative of the anagrammatic function of the language in *FW*, which turns interior monologue into 'moanolothē inturned' or 'Extorreor Monolothē' (254.14 and 105.12). Cheimonas's inversion follows this paradigm.

¹⁰⁵ Samuel Beckett, *Watt* (London: A Calder Jupiter book, 1963), p. 163.

Thus he shows the consequences of the entrance of reason, symbolic order, which intervening into the instinctual, creates a 'mental ordeal' (p. 37) and prevents the genesis of what he calls 'somatic logos', coded feminine, instinctual and for this reason pure (*Dysthymi*, p. 75). The fundamental fault and original evil derives from reason which destroys the house-body of language. That also is the reason why the couple cannot find, and does not know, what it is looking for, and the sexual union cannot be completed.

The mediation of a third person, the dowser, a man who, with his thick twig, is identical to the man of the sexual intercourse episode, creates the tripartite formula of this union. The twig, a tool used to probe the rocks in order to find 'milk and fresh water' (p. 38), is a weapon with disastrous consequences but also with apparent bodily attributes. '[This is a very dangerous weapon] says the dowser [unfailing and sensitive like a muscle but also destructive]' (p. 39). This phallic intrusion which transforms the gestation process into a matter concerning the two men, the dowser and the woman's husband, turns the woman into a mediator between them; she is the flesh which bears the evil of the original sin. But in this strange union the birth is the basic fault, as the man says:

We rejected everything as wrong and we began from the beginning. A reconstruction if this is right. That the birth is the basic fault and the beginning of evil this has been said mostly and it is also said by the people. [...] And since we rejected everything and along with that a right thing and to reject the right is worse than not to know it. He stopped losing his train of thought [...]. (My emphases, *Ekdromi*, p. 40)

However, the offspring of this union is a monster. A teratogenesis of logos occurs under the impact of the Dowser and the imposition of reason upon the instinctual.¹⁰⁶ Apparently this monstrosity is the outcome of the intervention of reason in the alleged copulation, whose only purpose seems to have been the parturition of voice and gesture, in order for meaning

¹⁰⁶ '[And the monster is born] says the nurse with malice. [what monster the woman tried to protect herself with her hands] says he exasperated. He looks at the nurse upset and with horror and says [the monster] and he bows his head

to be produced. In this allegorical copulation for the genesis of logos, everything has been reversed, owing to its metaphorical rendition in bodily terms. The anticipated birth is expected not from the vagina but from the mouth, the throat where the voice is blocked as a flute.

This displacement transfers the intercourse from the genitals to the respiratory system, turns the delivery of logos into an obstructed breath and poetry into rhythmic bodily intonation.¹⁰⁷ In Beckett's *Watt* the same device introduces schizophrenia in the text. In Cheimonas, this is the para-aphasic function of logos, a common experience in a contemporary individual's life. The dislocated organs, in parallel with the malformed syntax and the violated grammar structure, become the members of the sacrificed symbolic order on the altar of *jouissance* experienced in dislocated bodily areas. The word, the repetition, the chiasmus, engenders the experiencing of all the divergent entries and exits of the human body in order for pleasure to be accomplished. Meaning is of no significance, only the begetting of logos as sound, in other words as breathing out. This is not far from what Joyce does with the respiration process in 'Aeolus'. The metaphoricity of this copulation, which takes place in terms of sounds and gestures, also has a theological background transposed in psychosomatic terms: the breath of God which created life but also the breath of God which, as a holy spirit, impregnated the Virgin Mary. The suggested suffocation of the utterance is an obstructed exhalation. The obstructed exhaling prevents the sublimation of the utterance. The long sentence intensifies the blocking of the voice, of the breath, and brings forward the 'fallacy' of intercourse. Unable to be completed, the copulation is exhausted in an endless commerce of words and sounds, or of breathing in and out. Perhaps the blocked respiration derives from a psychosomatic function which has been displaced to

to protect himself and in horror he looks around with panic towards the misty leafage that breathes slowly like a sleeping animal's belly' (*I Ekdromi*, p. 41).

¹⁰⁷ In Joyce's comedy this displaced function is rendered with economy and in the punning of the words: 'Mouth, south. Is the mouth south someway? Must be some. South, pout, out shout, drought. Rhymes: two men dressed the same, looking the same, two by two' (*U*, 7:715-17).

other bodily organs or areas. The anticipated action cannot be completed or carried out due to this displacement. The subsided passion comes again in the form of breathing. A released excitement, related to the instinctual through the animal reference, highlights the problem of breathing within the text in the relaxed, slowly breathing belly of the animal begotten from this weird union.

As the text emits a biblical substratum, the original evil pertains not merely to the woman's body but to birth itself. The dowser's mediation appears as a messianic salvation from the fundamental fault of this union owing to his stick's power to probe the essences of things. Man and dowser share a consubstantial ground since the dowser is the man himself. By his interference, the birth becomes a matter between the two men, and the woman becomes a medium eventually excluded from their discussion. Her presence is an appropriation of the maternal absorbed into the men's relationship. In the context of overall inversion of everything her role is ambiguous. If a woman's body is threatened with destruction because of her giving birth to logos, this is not a merely feminine body, just as logos is not a purely masculine concept. The consubstantial element marks the process of this fusion to render logos as the consubstantial, only son, but also new-logos who encompasses the one and the other, body and language, sound and letter, the eye and the ear. This is the new logos of *O Giatros Ineotis*, a logos to end the symbol and give birth to the sound and to the letter.

5.5. *O Giatros Ineotis* (1971)

this person undertakes, on the mob's account, to uphold the meaning of the text, [...]: the mob has no logos, it is there to listen to him who speaks, speaks to it, and the mob by hearing this logos makes it everyday logos - common is the logos which radiates the acerbity of its demand to be heard, it is most of all audible. (Cheimonas, *Dysthymi*, p. 64)

The mouth that tells not will ever attract the unthinking tongue and so long as the obseen draws theirs which hear not so long till allearth's dumbnation shall the blind lead the deaf. [...] If violence to life, limb and chattels, often as not, has been the expression, direct or through an agent male, of womanhid offended, (ah! ah!) has not levy of black mail from the times the fairies were in it, and fain for wild erthe blothoms followed by impressive private reputation for whispered sins? (*FW*, 68-69.32-40)

O Giatros Ineotis, Cheimonas's fourth book, is fabricated around the logos as a speaking voice, and incestuous love. The story focuses on Ineotis's journey towards the scene of death. The protagonist is a newcomer, a weird presence and a hybrid name. He is accompanied by a mute gypsy, a sharpener of knives who carries a whetstone on his back. This whetstone, being also a wheel, introduces the circular movement of logocentricism upon which the gypsy sharpens the murderous knives to be used against the mob. Eventually the wheel will tear apart the gypsy too under the impact of the sound of Ineotis's voice. The book deals with the death and rebirth of logos. People, Cheimonas's 'man-concepts' are to die (*Exi Mathemata*, p.115). They had been promised a painless and natural death but now they know that they are going to die in a dreadful way.¹⁰⁸ The book is an allegory of the audible voice which aims at reactivating the sense of hearing and restoring man's primordial contact with the world of senses and the body. 'It is about this primary dialogue, 'ancestor (and in *Giatros Ineotis*'s case descendant too) of the *common* traditional

¹⁰⁸ 'Furious crazy people would mangle and burn them alive would disembowel them with rusty irons [...]. A terrible but fair punishment' (*O Giatros Ineotis*, p. 10).

Narration' (*Dysthymi*, p. 65). The new logos is going to be reborn though a bleak partitioning of language, which will restore the relationship of the word with the senses (p. 47). The revelation of the incestuous drama hidden behind the 'sweet stories' (p. 29) of logos will be carried out with neologisms, spasmodic syntax and wild images. The dense symbolism of the text cannot be comprehended unless seen within the literary and philosophical loans it embeds. Dealing with audible logos and subsequently with the ear, the story draws upon Joyce's 'auradrama' (ear-drama, *FW*, 517. 24) and Derrida's essay 'The Tympan'. The book, as Cheimonas relates, is written in the form of a helical shell of ammonite, suggesting the petrification of sound-speech into fossil through time.

It is about six concentric spirals and always the same story, the same meaning-experience repeated immutable on six successive layers. The microscopic level is semiotically¹⁰⁹ occupied by the core story, which gradually expands to the successive layers and as they broaden and amplify seem to extricate uneven pieces of life from some invisible wall which surrounds them. Suddenly the last cycle recoils and returns to the central, maternal cell of the story.¹¹⁰

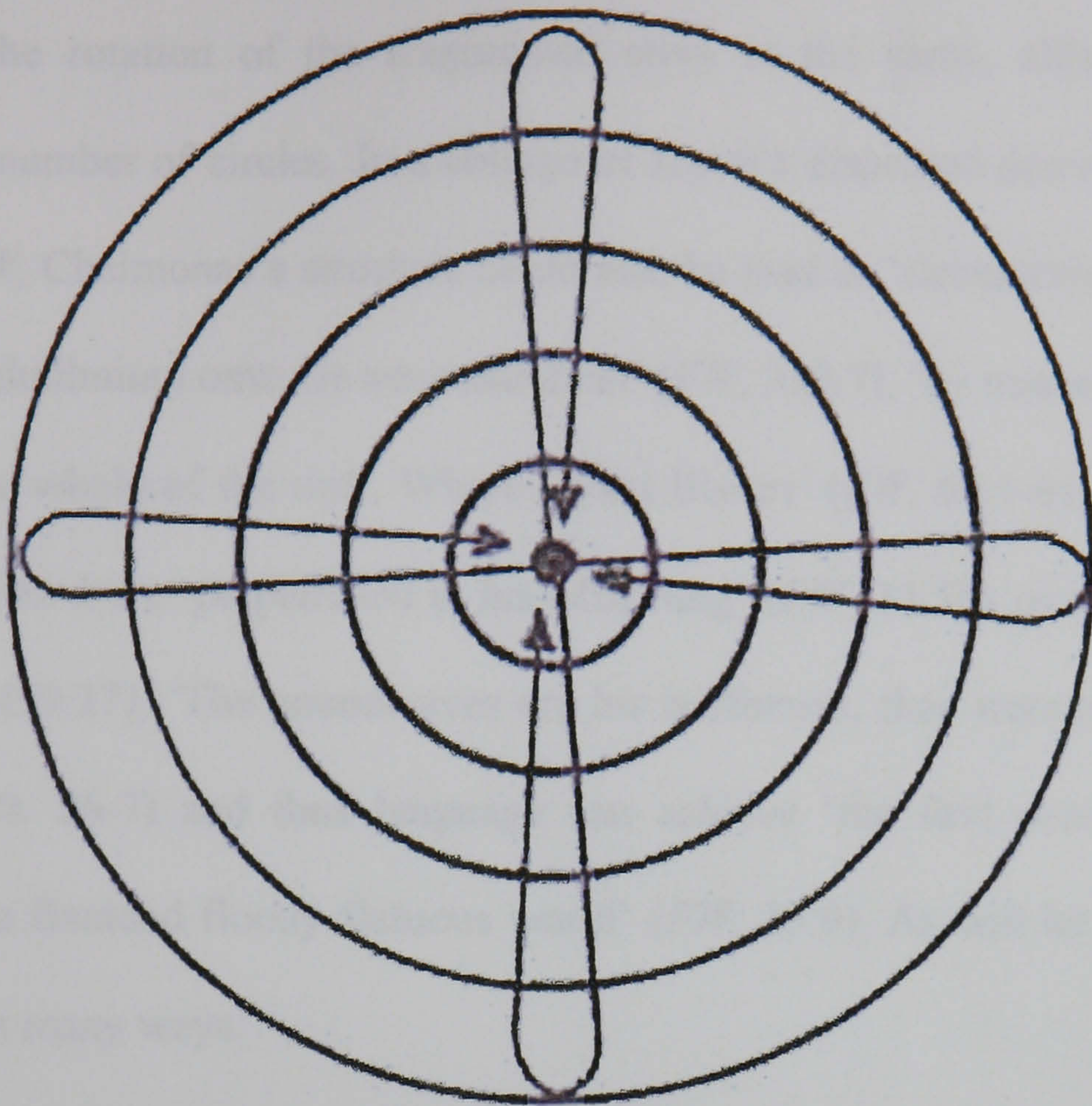
This helical structure of the book relates it to the ear. The expansion of the nuclear story into expanding circles of uneven meaning, echoes the circular and 'Adomic [atomic] structure' of *FW* (615. 6). *FW* is built in four dream-cycles which represent Vico's *ricorso* and four ages of history.¹¹¹ As Clive Hart shows, 'according to the molecular principle on which *FW* is built, each minor cycle in some way reflects this major succession of dream cycles'.¹¹² Hart's diagram is comparable to Cheimonas's concentric helixes (see next page), which is a spiralling 'endless line beginning at 'riverrun' near the top' [...] and after four cycles 'leads [...] back to 'riverrun', the point of its departure, just as in Cheimonas's scheme the last circle recoils and returns to the central cell of the story. The circular

¹⁰⁹ One can see Cheimonas's combination of Derrida's spiral with Kristeva's semiotic activity.

¹¹⁰ 'O Megalos Logos', in *Exi Mathemata*, pp. 108-9.

¹¹¹ *FW* can be interpreted only if read as a dream, that is not linearly and 'by eliciting from the absurd murk a network of overlapping and associatively interpenetrating structures'. John Bishop, *Joyce's Book of the Dark* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1986), p. 274.

¹¹² Clive Hart, *Structure and Motif in 'Finnegans Wake'* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1962), p. 94.



Cheimonas's depiction of the concentric structure of *O Giatros Ineotis*, reproduced from *Exi Mathemata gia to Logo*

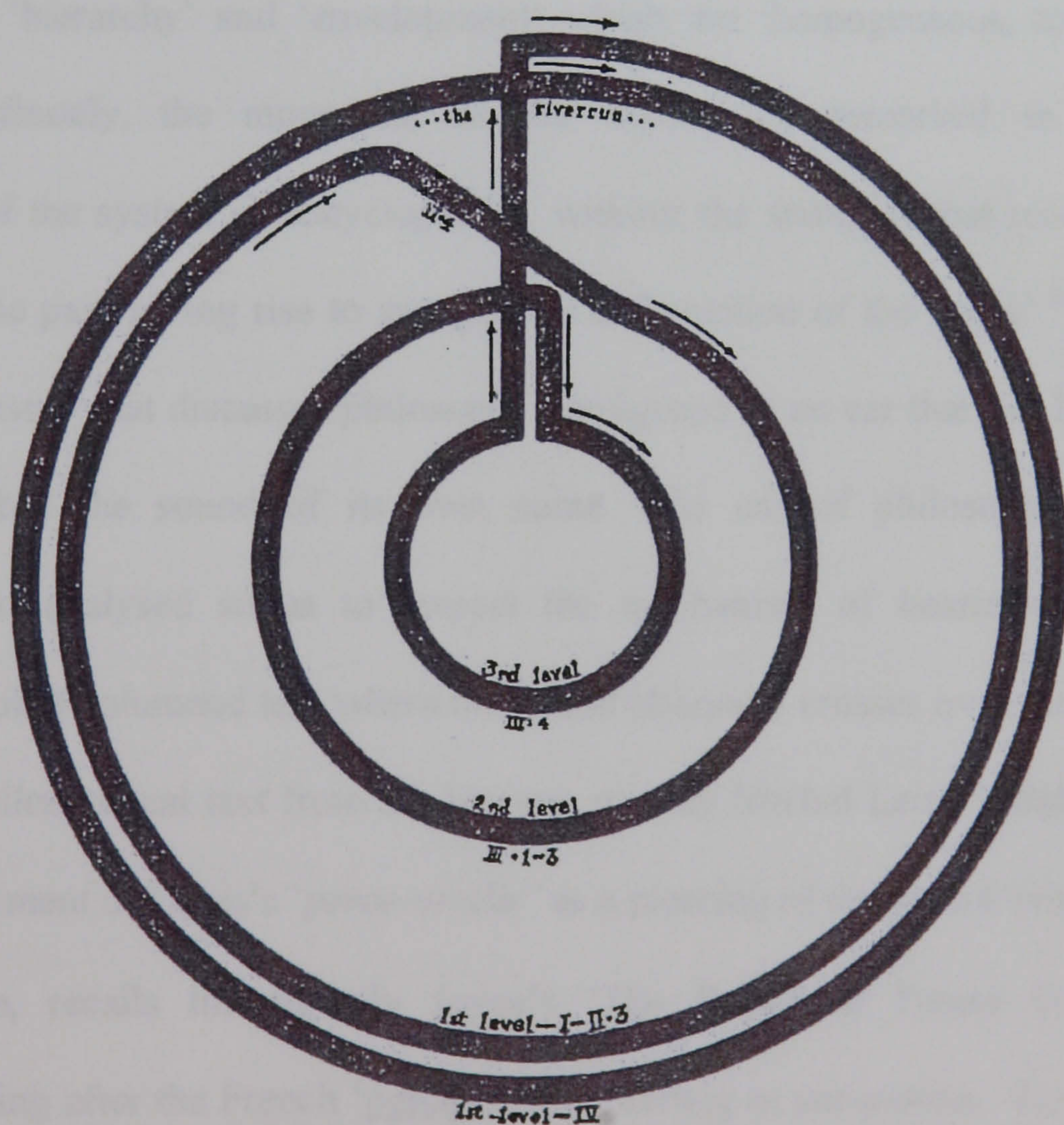


FIGURE II

'A conansdream of lodascircles'

Clive Hart's representation of the concentric structure of *FW*, reproduced from *Structure and Motif in FW*

movement and the rotation of the fragmented story is the same, although there is a difference in the number of circles. In a collage of Joyce's dispersed descriptions of sound and hearing in *FW*, Cheimonas's structure could also be read as 'circumcentric megacycles, ranging from antidulibnium onto the serostaatarean' (*FW*, 310.7), 'by memory inspired, turn wheel again to the whole of the wall. Where Gyant Blyant' (*FW*, 69.5-8), 'The dead giant manalive' (*FW*, 500. 1-2), 'perpetrified in his offsprung' (*FW*, 23.30) receives the 'zounds of sounds' (*FW*, 499.27). 'The soundwaves are his buffeteers; they trompe him with their trompes' (*FW*, 69. 26-7) and thus language can achieve 'the first peace of illiteratise porthery in all the flamend floody flatuous world' (*FW*, 23.9). As will be shown, the text draws upon *FW* in many ways.

However, Cheimonas's 'concentric spirals' and 'the invisible wall that surrounds them' (*Exi Mathemata*, pp. 109-10) have also a striking resemblance to Derrida's consideration of logocentrism as 'hierarchy' and 'envelopment' which are 'homogeneous, concentric and circulating indefinitely, the movement of the whole [is] remarked in the partial determinations of the system or encyclopaedia, without the status of that remark, and the partitioning of the part, giving rise to any general deformation of the space'.¹¹³ Derrida's 'Tympan' is an essay that discusses philosophy configured as an ear that has learnt to tune out everything but the sound of its own name. The ear of philosophy is x-rayed, diagrammed, and analysed so as to project the mechanism of hearing-oneself-speak. Derrida's is a double-columned text where the sound obliquely crosses over the blank space separating the philosophical text from the literary, namely Michel Leiris's *Biffures* (1948). Derrida's employment of Leiris's '*perce-oreille*' as a piercing of the *phonê* (voice) deriving from Persephone, recalls immediately Joyce's 'The Ballad of Persse O'Reilly' and Earwicker's naming after the French 'perce-oreille', earwig or ear-piercer. For Derrida the

¹¹³ Derrida, 'Tympan', in *A Derrida Reader: Between the Blinds*, pp. 148- 170 (p. 159). Both terms, hierarchy and envelopment, are employed by Derrida in his analysis of the tympanum, as ways of appropriating mastery which

question is how 'to pierce this ear from outside without rendering it simply useless', which is the question of deconstruction concerning the phenomenon of speech in relation to writing. In Cheimonas, however, the text aims at speaking in the ear of literature itself and in the ear of a humanity which is coming to an end. In this discourse the issue is not deconstruction but the destruction of the organ, the organ of the other, as we shall see, the other who becomes 'me'.

The hierarchical order is to be violated and eventually destroyed by the part which stands as manifestation of the whole. Thus, Ineotis's voice which is also the voice of art, or of poetic language, breaks through or disrupts the circular movement of the wheel of logocentrism (here represented by the Gypsy's whetstone) which, as Derrida claims, is also the space of the ear:

[...] The distinct, differentiated, articulated organ that produces the effect of proximity, of absolute properness, the idealising erasure of organic difference. It is an organ whose structure (and suture that holds it to the throat) produces the pacifying lure of organic indifference. To forget it - and in so doing to take shelter in the most familial of dwellings - is to cry out for the end of organs, of others.

('Tympan', p. 156)

The text focuses on the partitioning of language, where the part speaks for the whole, and separated by it, carries a life of its own. This new logos introduces neologisms, tears apart language and narrative, and most of all dismembers the human body in an attempt to dramatize the end of man-concepts. As the name Giatros Ineotis (Γιατρός Ινεότης) suggests, this newcomer is a hybrid personality. His name itself is a neologism connoting the therapeutic character of language, as 'Giatros' means doctor in Greek and the author himself was a doctor.¹¹⁴

communicate with each other following the movement of the same wheel whether it is a question of Heidegger's hermeneutic circle or of Hegel's ontotheological circle.

¹¹⁴ As Cheimonas said 'I am Giatros Ineotis'. Interview with N. Chatzidaki, quoted Mikela Chartoulari, 'Giorgos Cheimonas', *Ta Nea*, p. 26.

The essential thing associating Cheimonas's text with Joyce's book of the ear is his ambition to make human logos audible, to give us an 'earsighted view of the world' (*FW*, 143. 9-10), by dismantling the 'lubberendedth of its otological life' (*FW*, 310. 21). Giatros Ineotis is the herald of new logos, the sonic logos, the audible voice and common logos (*Dysthymi*, p. 64). He announces to people their forthcoming end. It is as if he caused it, for he has already seen this end, he has already experienced it, as Cheimonas states (*Dysthymi*, p. 65).¹¹⁵ In the text, the helical construction of the book is represented in a shell, a metaphor for the petrification of meaning buried in the fossil. The new logos is going to be extracted or resurrected from the swirls of ammonite which resemble the structure of the ear. Joyce uses the same metaphor. In the 'Sirens' episode, when Bloom refers to the barmaid's ear as a shell, the ear is associated with the broader thematic matrix of the sea, and its cosmological perception as blood relating to the musicality and the rhythm of the body; 'the sea they think they hear. Singing. The blood it is. Souse in the ear sometimes. Well, it's a sea. Corpuscle islands' (11:945-46). But in Cheimonas, the shell as ear takes more after *FW*'s 'otion that was breeder to sweatoslaves' (309. 12). The shells suggest the death of language and of its meaning trapped within the 'sweet stories' of normative language and it is therefore presented in an uncanny ambience:

They were frightened motionless and upset because of a shell. When during a dig they happened to find a shell from the buried sea and then workers arose with reverence and turned the shell upside down and they observed the fossil with excitement and with melancholy they remained motionless a mysterious emotion and unusual emotion for such men of slavery and hard labour tortured in reveries of shells. (*O Giatros Ineotis*, p. 48)

¹¹⁵ 'If one man in the world has finished, along with him, in him, all people have finished [...] the great time has finished, so that the logos which will announce it, maybe born immediately. And it is going to be logos of art, because only art is capable of uttering such an annunciation and especially to *prove* it, because art is a unique way of making common the very same logos - when logos becomes the *same* it is because it is *common*' (*Dysthymi*, p. 65-66).

The uncanny presentation of normative logos is a recurrent motif in Cheimonas. In his text *O Gamos*, common logos is personified in a human figure called 'the Sad one'. In Cheimonas's words,

The sad man showed no sadness. But his face had an excitement and provoked terror. [...] Like a tower of shimmering fabrics and stretched. Aerials and scaffolds support its huge facade. Like a broad and erect crest it leaned backwards and swayed with every movement of the sad man. It had a diameter of ten meters and from its edges torn banners and talismans were fluttering. Stuck together like magnetized indiscernible and terrifying things and remains of animals and people and all gathered together with a maniacal coquetry, and constantly to fall apart and fall to the ground and low down is discerned his terrible face and all that icon-screen he was pacing. He shattered and very slowly disappeared as if the light of day was very slowly eating away that supernatural and magnificent human scaffold.

This could be common logos, logos of art: a huge mosaic, the supernatural and magnificent human scaffold with pieces of the world glued to it. (*Exi Mathemata*, pp. 121-2).

This passage has a striking resemblance to Joyce's description of the paternal figure of *FW*, and is representative of all logos for Cheimonas. Joyce's 'european' hero (*FW*, 598. 15) is 'a man made static' (*FW*, 309.9) like the sad who showed no sadness, and 'equipped with supershielded umbrella antennas for distance, getting and connected by magnetic links [...] capturing skybuddies' (*FW*, 309. 22, 17-18), Joyce's 'harmonic condenser enginium' (*FW*, 310.1), Earwicker, radio and radar.¹¹⁶ Cheimonas obviously aspires to create a style in the light of, or similar to, Joyce's *FW*. This can also be indicated by the neologisms of *Giatros Ineotis* starting with Ineotis's name or by incomprehensible words like 'loudia' (p. 40). However, references such as lake Olivia and lake Isabella (p. 27) immediately suggest Anna Livia, the mother and Issy-Isabel-Iseult, the daughter of *FW*, and their watery nature, as Anna Livia is also a river-ocean-water. In addition, Ineotis has a voice in contrast to the gypsy who is mute, an echo of the Mutt and Jutte dialogue (15.29- 18.16) in *FW* and of

¹¹⁶ For this passage's reference to Earwicker as radio and radar see Bishop, *Joyce's Book of the Dark*, pp. 274-276.

Joyce's recurrent motif of deaf-mute in *FW*. Similarly the style of the narrative is deliberately inconsistent and as willfully obscure as *FW*, which was 'conceived as obscurity and, it was executed as obscurity, it is about obscurity'.¹¹⁷

The story of Ineotis displays the same narrative liquefaction as Cheimonas's previous books. No commas, no capital letters at the beginning of a sentence or a paragraph, mixing of sub-stories, inexplicable blank spaces between pieces of text which aspire to be, without being, paragraphs, a graphical inconsistency functioning in parallel with the syntactical. The principal difference is in the separation of the voices of the characters, here italicized. Thus each speaking voice is now distinguished from the others to indicate the function of sonic in contrast to written logos. As audible logos and love are the main themes of the book, the reader encounters the murderous voice of a piercing sound which penetrates the mob as erotic violence, deforming and marring the human body, tearing it into pieces. Cheimonas invokes a linguistic primitivism, close to semiotic activity breaking through the symbolic.¹¹⁸ The sound of the voice pierces the symbolic 'envelopes' of language - here presented as sweet stories - to give rise to the most primitive, wild, incestuous and murderous desires which constitute all traditional narrative and language, as the narration suggests:

Hidden inside wavy sweet stories and blindly they put their hands under smooth narrations like embroidered sheets they thrust in their hands and they finger him blindly with emotional delirium (*Giatros Ineotis*, p. 29).

In contrast to these 'sweet stories' which all conceal incestuous and murderous relationships, the story that Ineotis's piercing voice announces has to accord with his belief that, '*what is of value in man is to have a shocking story to narrate and those who have not*

¹¹⁷ Adaline Glasheen, *A Census of 'Finnegans Wake': An Index of the Characters and Their Roles* (London: Faber and Faber; Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1956), p. xviii.

¹¹⁸ 'This speech and its hearing likely being a relic of the Drama, especially of its genesis, when the speaker separated from the chorus and for the first time he was heard speaking, and for the first time the mob became silent and heard him speaking [...] in this way also the logos of the people was born- when the mob suddenly stood and turned and saw and distinguished somebody who shouted towards it and stood and heard him' (*Dysthymi*, p. 65).

and have not even imagined a story. They are lost forever and I will never turn to look at them [...] (*Giatros Ineotis*, p. 19).

Thus Ineotis's voice aims to reveal the incestuous drama behind all narrative and language, and to undo and outdo its conventional envelopment, or as Cheimonas phrases it, 'it is logos suicide'.¹¹⁹ Encompassing all people, as a part and a whole, and their relationships which are all sexual and incestuous, the murder is to be carried out in blood-letting images representing narrative and language. A generation of new people, the executioners, and the gypsy's wheel, are to perform the execution. 'With the new people he appeases the executioners and with the executioners he gives form to the new people. In this way words were detached from feelings and they became one like the amalgam of the waters' (p. 47). The executioners are not far from Joyce's 'elecutioner' (*FW*, 58. 34-35) 'executioner [s] of elocution and a mute practitioner [s] of "allocutionary" speech acts' as Bishop says.¹²⁰ Their execution of eloquence will bring about the liquefaction of the word. This liquefying of the words, which have been detached from the feelings, enhances the dissolution of the text's discourse. Ineotis's voice falls upon the mob; his voice tears apart the whetstone-sharpener (gypsy), probing the meaning of language and narrative until they become the gypsy's mutilated bodily members. Twice in the text of *Giatros Ineotis* the human body is emptied out of its torn skin under the effect of the voice's sound. The first time Ineotis's voice tears the gypsy apart:

Giatros Ineotis enjoys his omnipotence and from afar tore the sharpener mercilessly into pieces. [...]

The gypsy battles for his soul but smiles tenderly at Giatros Ineotis[...]. Giatros Ineotis saw on sharpener's back it was not a wheel but from his back upright bones had come out like a knotty skeleton hunchback and like a chair made of bones and he realized how much he would suffer and

¹¹⁹ According to Cheimonas, this is the logos of an only son without an opposite logos. 'That is to say it is not definable, does not sound and resonate on the sonic barrier raised against him by an inherent erotic logos opposed to him. It spreads out inert and immense, futile and only becomes common due to the gypsy's body, and for this reason he alone decides its end, it pauses by itself: it is logos suicide' (*Dysthymi*, p. 75).

¹²⁰ Bishop, *Joyce's Book of the Dark*, p. 268.

would be hurt by this thing like a chair made of thick and living bones at whose ends golden red marrow glowed. (*O Giatros Ineotis*, pp. 20-21)

Similarly, Ineotis is torn apart by the wind, the breathing out of his voice:

[...] the wind was slowly taking away all the flesh from the face and the stretched head of Giatros Ineotis naked and the skull appeared the eyes emptied the mild air passes freely and it passes through the open holes of the head and is gently stirring in the eye-sockets and it stirs fragments of images remaining and some fragments come adrift he pushes them amongst the bones of the ears and there they became a buzzing of dull voices and ragged music and some of the fragments fell down to the depths of the nostrils and they became a burning smell and dregs of an odour. (*O Giatros Ineotis*, pp. 45-46)

The emptiness of both bodies is related to the words or the sound, and in both cases the scaffold of the human body appears as the hard sound which remains naked of literary envelopment. As this is a deconstructing effect of the sound, it is also a destructive one in the ear as the sound pierces and destroys the tympanum or ‘pinnatrate inthro an auricular forfickle’ (the four cycles) (*FW*, 310. 9-10). For the discourse of this text is to be inscribed on the membrane of the ear, to pierce and tear it apart; Derrida’s ‘envelopment’ and ‘hierarchy’ of logocentrism, which sustain all meaning in language.

Cheimonas carries out an uncanny visualization of the deconstruction performed by sound upon the body of language. This pictorial representation of the dismemberment of logos outdoes all anti-language and anti-aesthetics, surpassing Beckettian irony, Nietzschean nihilism and the premises of deconstruction. In *O Giatros Ineotis*, his new-born logos, the sound of the voice, tears apart Cheimonas’s man-concepts. ‘People are human pieces,’ says Ineotis (p. 11), but these are not merely people, any more than language and words are concepts and ideas. They are the constituent parts of a whole which has been violated by their separation, extraction and setting free. The body has ceased to signify by its wholeness and can only produce meaning by its dismemberment and through displaced functions.

Similarly, the story or the stories aim at removing the ‘embroidered sheets’ within which they are wrapped and denounce the ‘sweetness’ and smoothness of their narrative, revealing the truths hidden behind their envelopment. A violent, murderous eroticism, wild and primitive, is summoned up to destroy identity and gender. The syntactical order of the text is relatively restored as it unfolds with murderous and blood-letting images which depict the morbidity of rational logos. Ineotis ends his incestuous relation with his sister by murdering her to appropriate her voice.

He took an iron-rod and pierced her throat and the sister leaned from the chair and fell down. With her mouth half open dead. He stepped on her cried and trod on her abdomen her breast and from the orifice in her throat blood came out and a glougloulou but not the song. (*O Giatros Ineotis*, pp. 17-18)

In debased, incestuous and murderous family romances, where the participants perform erotic union by eating, killing and engulfing each other, the mystery of the Eucharist is turned into carnage of sexual violence. Cheimonas presents an ailing and invalid daughter named Thomai who sang a sad song.¹²¹ Thomai was involved in an incestuous sexual action with her father under the protection of her mother. Thomai’s song resembles a folk-rhyme referring to the Holy Trinity and the crucifixion of Christ. Her song and the lullaby of the mother, who covers and protects the relationship between father and daughter, accompany the incest. Song, rhythm, cadence are all related to the woman’s presence. This song also introduces the core incest story, Tenagne’s story and allegory of the incestuous character of language.

Tenagne is a woman and a symbol. Her white body being reminiscent of an evensong or vesper, the evening star Venus (p. 28) associates her with chastity and subsequently with

¹²¹ ‘Three people anointed the country. Two thieves and a murderer. sainttheodora’s eyes were full of tears. The holytrinity was in tears. The evil time grabbed everything. A morsel of communion bread. Poor beggar sainttheodora. Three times poorer holytrinity[...]’(unfortunately the metre and rhyme cannot keep their form in the English translation, p. 26).

the church.¹²² Tenagne's name echoes Earwicker's 'tangué', 'his I've Ivy under his tangué [...] before there was a sound in the world?' (FW, 485.21-22). 'Tangué', as Bishop shows, derives from a combination of the words tongue and language, in Gaelic *teanga* which is almost an anagram of Tenagne.¹²³ Within Cheimonas's use of aphasic language, strange words, anagrams and weird lexical constructions reveal the essential meaning of language.¹²⁴ Thus Tenagne can also be construed as a representation of language itself but of an old defunct language. She watches and orchestrates the erotic intercourse of each member of a family with a visiting stranger named Christian. Thus the story turns into an allegory for the church itself and the incestuous relationships smouldering under the rites of communion and fraternity. 'Tenagne instructs everything because she first of all. Naked and kneeling enjoys the union of the stranger with the relatives she purifies it with her thickened stare' (pp. 30-31). She is a virgin *intacta*, her hands never touch, as she says (p. 31). She is also the mediating woman, 'the sister or the spouse of the friend who is absent all the time' (p. 29), appropriated and absorbed by the male. She also echoes Nietzsche's castrating woman, for Tenagne eats of the stranger, Christian. In an excessive eroticism, she bites, she gnaws and chews him (p. 39). The whole story stages a wild incestuous drama which stands for the genesis of logos just as the dowser's story did for the conception of logos. In a pandemonium of sounds of eating, biting and tearing apart the human body, Ineotis appears erotically aroused to bring the new logos: 'an incomprehensible word loudia' (p. 40). As all literature is presented as veiled by these embroidered sheets which, covering the true incestuous story of logos render the story in absence, Tenagne's presence is the catalyst for the release of the instinctual hidden behind the veil. Her body represents musicality, rhythm. She is Cheimonas's 'somatic logos' and for this reason 'present' which reappears

¹²² 'Tenagne's white body flashed and something like laughter or evensong' (p. 28).

¹²³ Bishop, *Joyce's Book of the Dark*, p. 299.

¹²⁴ See Cheimonas's ideas on natural para-aphasia, and the inherent para-aphasic character of language, *Exi Mathemata*, pp. 86-87.

in his book *O Adelfos* as the voice of the sister.¹²⁵ She narrates old stories, about old women (p. 38) who while eating bread were spitting little pieces from their mouth, and along with them the syllables 'ΓΑ' (Ga), 'ΔΠΑ' (Dra), extracted from an old piece of marble in Tenagne's story. The syllabification and the absence of the word point to the dissolution in language already performed on the human body by Tenagne's eating of Christian.¹²⁶

At that moment a distant voice was heard and a singing distant voice like a mother's from somewhere far off they shouted a Hebrew name I think Rau yes Rau [...] and the two women the syllables ΓΑ ΔΠΑ and suddenly. (*O Giatros Ineotis*, p. 38)

As the women become syllables themselves under the impact of the maternal singing voice, the whole dissolution of narrative and language reflects Kristeva's concept of poetic language as the equivalent of incest and an appropriation of the maternal. This is no more an ironic undoing or dramatization than an endorsement of a particular language theory.¹²⁷ Cheimonas performs an interesting amalgamation of Kristeva's theory of poetic language and Derrida's deconstruction, and on the ground these theories share, which is the repression of the other as the mother from the hermeneutic circle of Western metaphysics, phallogentricity or logocentricism. Eating of the body and spitting of syllables represent the massacre of old logos and the birth of the new one. He celebrates the sound with Tenagne's voice and name and the howling cry of terror before incest. As she dies, Ineotis cuts off her eyelids to make her see the ends of man, and his own. One has to have a 'quick ear for spittoons' (*FW*, 38. 9-10), to read through the interstices of Cheimonas's narrative. Tenagne's violent sexual orgy that tears the human body apart and along with it all

¹²⁵ In Cheimonas's abstruse symbolism the female presence is always the body, the somatic logos and this, for us, links him with Kristeva's theory of the semiotic. See *Dysthymi*, pp. 74-76.

¹²⁶ 'For' as Joyce says, 'they are now tearing, that is teartoreturning. Too soon are coming tasbooks and goody, hominy bread and bible bee [...] Fine's French phrases from the Grandmère des Grammaires and bothered parsenaps from the four Massores, Mattatias, Marusias, Lucanias, Jokinias' (*FW*, 256. 17-21).

¹²⁷ 'If it is true that the prohibition of incest constitutes, at the same time, language as communicative code and women as exchange objects in order for a society to be established, *poetic language would be* for its questionable subject-in-process *the equivalent of incest*: it is within the economy of signification itself that the questionable subject-in-process appropriates to itself this archaic, instinctual, and maternal territory; thus it simultaneously prevents the word from being mere sign and the mother from becoming an object like any other- forbidden' (*Desire*, p. 136).

language and reason reveals the incestuous origins of language. Logos, the paternal symbolic order, is torn to pieces; it becomes fragments and syllables coming from female mouths. It becomes the meal of the virgin intacta Tenagne extracted from the wildest unconscious fantasies, just as the paternal character of HCE becomes somebody's supper in a parody of primitivism in *FW*. Tenagne's incestuous relationship also reveals the semiotic activity, relating to the other, the unconscious, the mother, in Kristeva's terms; Cheimonas's singing women, for all the feminine appearances in the text sing a song, a tune or a melody. It is the sister's song that Ineotis appropriates; by murdering her he assumes a voice of his own, the terrible voice of the new-born son. Cheimonas characterizes the discourse of this book as logos (consubstantial) of the only son (μονογενής), *homoousios* in other words, also a suggestion for the sonic conception and delivery of logos as shown in the dowser's story. This only son's lonely voice does not confront its opposite for in this story he has all voices encompassed in his own. He is one and the other, the whole and the part.

The effect of all those allegories derives from the focus on separate bodily organs, the eye and the ear, as well as the liberation of the constituents of the word, phonemes and morphemes. This enterprise is in line with Joyce's subversive language play and word-games, all based on the exploitation of sound which began with *U* and culminated in the prodigal narrative and language of *FW*. Cheimonas's undoing of language and narrative draws upon the philosophical legacy which developed in dialogue with Joyce's work. Derrida is the most exemplary case of hybridization: he deconstructs the word and rewrites it according to the multiplicity of the sound produced by the bivocal function of the phoneme such as *différance* (both differ and defer), or puns on words like hymen and hymn. The sound and the letter, suppressed within the spatio-temporal economy of language in order for meaning to be produced, are set free to produce meaning. It is a 'responding to the call of the phoneme, whose echoes tell of wild realms beyond the code and suggest new

configurations of meaning'.¹²⁸ This process moves in parallel with the deployment of terms from physiology, the vocabulary of the body. The tympan, the glottis, the concha, the vestibular canal, the semicircular canals, the cochlea, the tympanic membrane etc. are literally and metaphorically employed to discuss the sense of hearing-oneself-speak. The grammatological and etymological constituents and origins of the words are set free to signify by the impact that they produce on the human body, eye-ear. They emerge in strange combinations, hybrid words and neologisms. These neologisms aim at reactivating the senses in a provocative play on the sound in order to restore the primordial meaning of the word relating to the body. The quest seems to be a matter of a sensual aftermath on the human body; the reactivation of the bodily senses trapped in or neutralized by the chronic dominance of the logocentric tradition, of reasonable thought. This deconstructing operation which upholds the neologisms (Derrida), can lead either to humorous hybrid synthesis (e.g. Joyce's Earwicker of *FW*), or to uncanny and incomprehensible naming (e.g. Cheimonas's 'Ineotis'). In this way theological and philosophical logos is rendered defunct. Joyce's play with language, rooted in punning and alliteration, is similarly associated with the corporeal comedy of anti-theology, upon which the language of *FW* is based. It is this same subversion that Cheimonas's work enacts. Or as Kristeva puts it, 'only one language grows more and more contemporary: the equivalent [...] of the language of *FW*' (*Desire*, p. 92).

The whole of Cheimonas's enterprise tends to a hybridization of language and narrative as suggested by the names of his characters, Ineotis and Tenagne, both being neologisms. These names convey an incubated and buried meaning among the whorls of the ammonite, in Cheimonas' metaphor of the ear as a shell, waiting for the piercing sound to resurrect them. The name Ineotis is marked by the word Νεότης (Neotis = youth) glued together with the definite article (H) (the) which has been de-feminized and turned into an (I). This is

¹²⁸Jonathan Culler, 'The Call of the Phoneme', in *On Puns: The Foundation of Letters*, ed. by Jonathan Culler (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), pp. 1-16 (p. 3).

Cheimonas's new-born logos, whose therapeutic properties are stressed by the denotative word Giatros (Doctor). Ineotis can also be read from another etymological viewpoint in accordance with Cheimonas's new logos, the liberation of the letter: In-e-otis or Ine-otis. Both insinuating a relation with the inner part of the ear, since the Greek word for it is οὖς - ωτός (ous - otos), and otitis, the disease of the inner part of the ear. Thus Doctor Ineotis 'speaks' into the inner ear, with an ill-named logos or ill-named things or even more into an ear which has become ill by the ill-sounding names or words.¹²⁹ It is logos which is destined to cause 'Acoustic Disturbances' (*FW*, 71.18) of all kinds and to reveal the 'otological life' of normative language. Tenagne's name, the name of a terrible virgin intacta who eats Christian, and along with it the naming process, is another invented name. Her name conveys ambiguity. It could be read as a compound word the first component being the Latin word tenax (tenacious) and the second a Latinized version of the Greek word 'agnos' signifying purity and virginity.¹³⁰ Thus it could mean the one who insists in purity. But most of all her name is an 'agnomen', not a real name but a nickname for language, just as Earwicker is HCE's 'occupational agnomen' (*FW*, 30.3). It is an allusion to *FW* itself and its 'tangua', tongue and language, teanga, as already mentioned. Cheimonas's narrative liquefaction, the anagrammatic function of the word and word-play, all take after the obscure language of *FW*, which he aspires to assimilate, in order to carry out his overall project of revealing the primordial meaning of language relating to the body.

¹²⁹ Derrida also refers to 'sign' as that ill-named thing, as follows: 'The sign is (crossed out) that ill-named thing (crossed out), the only one, that escapes the instituting question of philosophy: what is...?' (Unfortunately I cannot graphically depict the crossing out, so I merely state it). See 'The End of Book and the beginning of Writing', in *Of Grammatology*, p. 19.

¹³⁰ 'Tenax-cis' means stubborn, and 'agnos' is pure while agnus is lamb, *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, ed. by P. G. W. Glare, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon, 1976).

5.6. Conclusion

Cheimonas belongs to those authors who continue Joyce's legacy in a post-modern world. He draws upon Joyce's motifs of wandering traveller, incest, and androgynous artist and rewrites them within his own deconstruction of narrative and language in an idiosyncratic and uncanny way to support his theoretical project of making human logos audible. His work thematizes language and undoes its symbolic function through radical dramatizations which take place through a violent exploitation of the body and language itself. These dramatizations aim at an overall undoing or deciphering of the highly speculative terms employed by recent language theories which have developed in dialogue with Joyce's work. Revealing the bodily substratum of their metaphors: Other as symbolic order and other as unconscious, language as incest, androgynous artist, phallogentrism and logocentrism, Cheimonas lays bare the wildest and uncompromising instinctual impulses of man, hidden behind the ordinariness of normative language. To achieve this he draws upon phenomenology and psychosomatic medicine and particularly on aphasic language, which he partly employs as 'style' to show the para-aphasic operation of normative language. His play with language and the body is comparable to Joyce's work, namely his preoccupation with the sound and the functions of the human body within narrative.

In Cheimonas the body speaks for itself. Thus, when Cheimonas's symbolism becomes incomprehensible, his logos speaks about language and literary tradition. When the order is restored and a new symbolism takes place, a vigorous, cruel and violent thematization of the body speaks for the meaning behind the text, a sort of pathology of the text itself. This is *U*'s stylistic employment of the body in reverse. In *U*, the function or the thematization of the body itself threaten to destroy the symbolic order and to lead towards dissolution of the discourse bordering on incomprehensibility or nonsense. In Cheimonas, the cruel, violent and bloody depiction of the body, in its most uncanny aspect, accompanies the restored

order of his perturbed logos. It is as if it functions as an apocalyptic witnessing of the uncanny lurking behind the order of the symbolic, behind all reason, comprehensibility, logic and wholeness. On the contrary, the gaps in his logos, its silences and ambiguity are all at a distance from the body. They are employed in a sort of a metalanguage intended to speak for language itself, a metalanguage on a language of symbols. Thus all language is body with organic and inorganic characteristics; a body which suffers from the stylization imposed on it by the conventional function of language - symbolic order. An overall destruction of order is proclaimed. Writing is used as a therapeutic channel for the 'diseased' body of Man, and through this to restore the primordial meaning of the word.

To carry out this project, Cheimonas moves closer to the fragmented world of *FW*, surpassing *U*'s employment of the body as a scaffold which aims at aesthetic wholeness. Just as *FW*, instead of enacting a "gradus ad Parnassum" (steps to Parnassus) [...] asks its readers to take a few "false steps ad Pernicious" (*FW*, 467. 34), Cheimonas's work calls forth an overall subversion of the traditional narration, through an anti-language, an anti-narrative, an anti-novel.¹³¹ His fundamental difference from Joyce lies in the uncanny style of his texts. Although Cheimonas reworks Joycean motifs, and even thematizes Joyce's enterprise with language, his texts break with Joyce's humorous and corporeal comedy. That is because Cheimonas's work also endows his narratives with a philosophical and medicinal significance which aims at unveiling metaphors and symbols. His texts reveal the precarious condition of human existence: a violent inwardness, expressed in bodies that are deformed, disfigured, violated and distorted by psychosomatic symptoms; bodies which stand as metaphors for language itself. The symptoms speak for the body, the body speaks for the language. When the body suffers, language unfolds in approximately normative patterns, while when the body is presented in its completeness and wholeness, language is

¹³¹ Bishop, *Joyce's Book of the Dark*, p. 264.

disfigured to dramatize the paralysis of the concept within the para-aphasic character of normative logos. This is not a dramatization or an ironic undoing any more than an exemplification or propounding of certain psycholinguistic and philosophical ideas within a literary text. It is the precarious situation in which Cheimonas locates literature.

Concluding Remarks

This thesis has discussed the body within narrative and language as a particular contrivance of Joyce's modernism. Starting with *U*'s paradigmatic employment of the body in the text, the argument is expanded to three Greek authors, Stelios Xefloudas, Nikos Gavriil Pentzikis and Giorgos Cheimonas. These authors, who either claim to have been, or have been, influenced by Joyce's work, also employed the body in their narratives in the light of Joyce's enterprise and as a part of their thematization of aesthetic consciousness. The comparison of their work with Joyce's showed the corporeal aspects of artistic creativity, utterance and language as well as the aesthetic and hermeneutic possibilities of the text's symbiotic existence with the body. The argument drew upon theories concerning the bodily substratum of artistic creativity and language. Thus Freudian psychoanalysis (language of dreams and of the unconscious), Kristeva's theories and Lacan's symbolic order, Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, Derrida's deconstruction and psycho-physiological approaches such as Koestler's theories of artistic creation have all been discussed in connection with the body's employment in the text. Without endorsing any particular theory, the thesis has referred eclectically to links which some of these theorists have developed in dialogue with Joyce's work, especially Kristeva, Lacan and Derrida. The special focus is on the conjoining of artistic creativity, narrative devices, thematic motifs and language with the body's metaphorical and even literal exploitation in the text.

U's corporeal comedy, its ingenuity of symbolism and its linguistic virtuosity, has challenged and appropriated a vast literary and cultural tradition leading back to Hellenic and Judaic legacies, questioning the very foundation of Western metaphysics. Joyce revealed the heterogeneous and ambiguous identity of modern man and along with it the artist's consciousness, bisexual, androgynous, and always in a process of becoming. Joyce draws heavily upon the cultural legacy he inherits to ground his own assault upon it. Thus myth, archetypal patterns, philosophical and theological doctrines, psychoanalytic and

scientific discourses are exposed to the maelstrom of his mockery, while being simultaneously exploited within his narrative. Literary motifs, such as Homer's wine-dark sea, archetypal patterns such as the questing voyager, psychoanalytic concepts, such as incest, the Oedipus complex and parapraxis and mathematical, chemical and medical knowledge are all summoned up for his comedy of aesthetics. His artist's identity encompasses the scientist and the artist, the sage and the jester.

The employment of the body is part of Joyce's aesthetic consciousness. Propounding his principles of anti-sentimentality and of the invisible and impartial creator, Joyce explored the psycho-physiological processes underlying the act of creation. The emotional retrenchment of *U* endorsed a distant, quasi-scientific focus on physiological and natural phenomena. To achieve this, Joyce resorted to science as another relative discourse within his narrative. The implantation of scientific discourse in his narrative brings down to earth the sublime aesthetics underlying *U*'s psychological realism. His comedy, his humour, witticism and artistic vagaries are all underpinned by his Rabelaisian exploitation of the body's functions. Examining the humorous aspects of Joyce's art, the thesis attempts to show that metaphors such as the androgynous artist, writing as urination or peristaltic prose should not be taken literally and attributed to the author's disposition. Joyce's text should not be interpreted as the author's sexual or other perversion (anal or oral fixation) as some psychoanalytic approaches, based on metapsychology, have claimed. Instead, through these metaphors Joyce's text humorously alerts us to the physiological processes underlying psychological phenomena and reveals the cultural psycho-history written on the body and transcribed into the text through the medium of language. *U*'s ambivalence is rooted in its creator's conception of his text as a live entity, multi-levelled, stratified, heterogeneous, polymorphic, polyglottic and polyphonic as the schemes suggest.

All the Greek authors discussed in this study employ the body in the text in their attempt to assimilate Joyce's achievements. In their texts, the body sustains a subversive bias. Deriving from the quest for innovation in the Greek novel, which started with the 'introverted novel' in the thirties, these Greek authors worked in the light of Joyce's enterprise. Each of them, from his own standpoint, explores the inner processes of artistic creation and subjectivity. Either as psychosomatic anxiety and desire in Xefloudas, or as cathartic comedy in Pentzikis's undoing of the Parnassian legacy, or grotesque and uncanny dismantling of narrative and language in Cheimonas, the body upholds the overt tactics of novel-making. In an attempt to conjoin their work with European literature and to subvert and purge their own literary legacy from its imitative character, they try to reveal the repressed bodily substratum underlying the act of creation. This endeavour, then, encompasses both an undoing and a redoing of the literary past through criticism, irony, and parody.

All the Greek authors are linked with Joyce but also among themselves through the employment of the archetype of the questing voyager as a master metaphor for the inward adventure which is always a journey toward art, language and self-identity. The other aspect of all three authors which associates them with Joyce is that their novels thematize the means of their own creation. The focus on aesthetic consciousness and the flaunting of the experimental character of their work becomes a central issue in Xefloudas and Pentzikis. The expounding of the psychological and biological processes operating in the act of writing and the conjunction of scientific, or a scientific-like spirit, with philosophical discourse abound in Pentzikis and Cheimonas. Thus their texts invite the convergence of divergent fields of contemporary thought. Certain Joycean metaphors are re-employed by the Greek authors to emphasize the corporeal and copulative character of their art: the corporeal womb of imagination, the incest motif as motive for artistic creation and its bodily correspondences as conception - gestation - giving birth of the male artist occupy a

central role in Pentzikis's and Cheimonas's work. The androgynous artist is the shared motif which conjoins gender trouble with language and self-identity. With the exception of Xefloudas, then, the exploitation of Joyce's parodic theory of the Trinitarian dogma sustains the aesthetics of the androgynous artist-to-be.

The conjoining of the act of writing with the cyclical functions of the human body contributes to the text's musicality and rhythm while demonstrating the material substratum underlying all language: Xefloudas's musicality of the female body, Pentzikis's writing as blood-shedding, and Cheimonas's blood-letting word, are manifestations of these processes. These functions are eventually associated with cosmic phenomena charged with mythical meaning. Homer's winedark sea, mother earth, and ocean father are combined with language and gender questions. Joyce's archetypal world is revisited in a rewriting of basic motifs of archaic texts, particularly of the Homeric. All three authors employ myth although each one from his particular perspective. In Xefloudas myth sustains the antiheroic ambiance of his *Odysseas* and saturates his text with nostalgia for return to a prehistoric past of innocent and primitive sexuality. In Pentzikis, more in line with Joyce's mock-heroic, myth is employed as a scaffold which sustains the unity of his fragmented narrative and individual identity. Cheimonas tears myth itself into its constituent parts in a radical deciphering of mythic symbols as part of the theoretical project underlying his elliptical prose and language.

By virtue of their immense integrative bias and ingestion of intertextual loans, their heterogeneity of narrative and language, and their ambiguously gendered characters, the works of the Greek authors emulate Joyce's polyphonic novel. Their texts also are open to multi-signification and multi-interpretation. This polyphony encompasses past and present, the self and the other, conscious and unconscious in an attempt to explore language's possibilities in the human hierarchy as a whole.

Aspiring to be Joyce's successors, all three of them thematize the body, but only Pentzikis and Cheimonas manage to associate the body with language by exploring their symbiotic existence in the text. Thus, Xefloudas, who acknowledges Joyce's achievements with language in his critical work, can only thematize desire in language through naïve representations of, and immediate references to, the language's musicality in association with the world of the senses. His language, conjoining critical discourse with literary, reveals the psychological anxiety and despondency of an unsettled artistic subjectivity in quest for his otherness, coded feminine. Pentzikis, however, acknowledges and tries to assimilate the corporeality of Joyce's language. In parodic and grotesque appearances, his artistic persona tries to build its polymorphous identity through an all-absorbing tendency which engulfs all narrative voices and the female body's basic functions. He writes his novel with the blood of his heroine, Ersi, incorporating her body into his, in order to assume his androgynous artist's voice. This ambiguous identity is sustained with onomatopoeia, language games and word-play, which evidently have been influenced by Joyce's work.

Language becomes subject-matter in Cheimonas's elliptical prose. His idiosyncratic narratives enact an overall deciphering of the norms and symbols of rational language in order to reveal the world of the senses, the body's voice, or what he calls 'somatic logos', coded feminine. Cheimonas, in line with *FW* rather than *U*, endorses oral logos, speech and sound, and explores their acoustic effect through malformed syntax, grammar and word-formation. Just as Joyce, in *FW*, dissolves the medium of narrative and language to create the effect of understanding the world through the senses (hearing smelling etc), Cheimonas seeks to reveal the body's voice through a deconstruction, or even destruction, of language. However, in Cheimonas the exploration and exploitation of the symbiotic existence of the body and language is endowed with a philosophical and/or medicinal status. Thus his stories, which function as parables of art and language, as well as his malformed narrative

aim to show the 'para-aphasic' character of language and reveal the hidden meaning of the word relating to the body.

In this paradigmatic emulation of the Joycean text, Pentzikis's work is the closest to Joyce's, for it unfolds within the tripartite formula of the act of creation: humour and wit, aesthetic rapture and the scientific spirit. If Pentzikis perches on the tip of the Joycean iceberg, Xefloudas and Cheimonas cling on either side. The former tries to assimilate the inner processes of Joyce's paradigmatic narrative device of interior monologue; the latter tries to rework language in the light of contemporary psycho-linguistics and deconstructive philosophy, blending it with contemporary medical discoveries. The work of all three writers variously develops Joyce's paradigmatic employment of the body in the text.

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